

# **FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO RECIDIVISM OF ADULT MALE OFFENDERS**

by

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## DECLARATION

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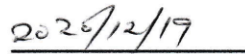
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I declare that the above dissertation/ thesis is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.



**Signature**



**Date**

## **DEDICATION**

This study is dedicated to my family - my wife Mareda Thivhafuni, and my three children (Gundo, Ndingoho and Otewa). You have been understanding and supportive, being appreciative of the little time I was able to spend with you. It is further dedicated to my mother, Thanyani Thinavhuyo and my demised brother, Nkhangweni Leonard Mareda; you were my fortress. It is so sad that the latter demised before he could celebrate this colossal achievement with me; may your soul rest in peace, big brother.

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## **ABSTRACT**

South Africa is one of the countries that have a high rate of recidivism, especially amongst adult male <sup>1</sup>offenders; this is evident in the large numbers flocking into the prisons. The high rate of recidivism is a serious problem in that it not only affects the offender and his immediate family, but also other vulnerable groups in society, as well as the government. The study intended to uncover various factors which contribute to this recidivism, as a phenomenon; South Africa has a notable dearth of research on factors contributing to recidivism. Unavailability of scientific research data has a negative impact on the fight against recidivism because it is empirical findings that can inform appropriate efficient and effective remedies to the challenge of recidivism.

This qualitative study utilised explorative, contextual, phenomenological and descriptive research designs with the ecological system theory as a framework. Data were collected by means of semi-structured, face-to-face interviews with adult males who have re-offended after being reintegrated with their families. Data analysis was guided by thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2013:175) while Lincoln & Guba's model in Bryman (2012:392) was employed for data verification. Ethical considerations were upheld throughout this study.

### **Key terms**

Recidivism, offender, factors, adult male

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<sup>1</sup>The use of this concept does not intend to label or demean the participants. This is a statutorily recognized concept in SA referring to sentenced accused person. The White paper on corrections (2005:53) advocate against social branding but navigate that they should be referred to as such where status is relevant in terms of correctional management.

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not the natural physical environment, at the centre of attention**

## **List of acronyms**

<b>PO</b>	<b>Probation Officer</b>
<b>DSD</b>	<b>Department of Social Development</b>
<b>DCS</b>	<b>Department of Correctional Services</b>
<b>NIJ</b>	<b>National Institute of Justice</b>
<b>USBJS</b>	<b>United States Bureau of Justice Statistics</b>
<b>USA</b>	<b>United State of America</b>
<b>UK</b>	<b>United Kingdom</b>
<b>SA</b>	<b>South Africa</b>
<b>DJCS</b>	<b>Department Of Justice and Correctional Service</b>
<b>PSS</b>	<b>Probation Service Specialist</b>
<b>DI</b>	<b>Direct Imprisonment</b>
<b>CCS</b>	<b>Community Correctional supervision</b>
<b>SS</b>	<b>Suspended Sentence</b>
<b>HB</b>	<b>House Breaking</b>
<b>AGBH</b>	<b>Assault with intention to cause grievous bodily harm</b>
<b>IA</b>	<b>Indecent assault</b>
<b>CD</b>	<b>Caution and Discharge</b>

<b>AG</b>	<b>Admission of Guilt</b>
<b>AR</b>	<b>Armed Robbery</b>
<b>MITP</b>	<b>Malicious Damage to Property</b>
<b>STD</b>	<b>Standard</b>
<b>CXCC</b>	<b>Child and Youth Care Centre</b>
<b>UNODC</b>	<b>United Nation Office on Drugs and Crime</b>
<b>EST</b>	<b>Ecological System Theory</b>
<b>RNR</b>	<b>Risk, Needs and Responsibility principle</b>
<b>WWP</b>	<b>What Works Principle</b>

## **CHAPTER ONE:**

### **GENERAL INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY**

This chapter outline the introduction and general orientation to the research. To be covered in this chapter are – the introduction and background to the study, problem statement, rationale for the study, research questions, goal and objectives, ethical considerations, clarification of concepts, limitations of the study and the structure of the study report.

#### **1.1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY**

Recidivism is one of the most significant problems in the criminal justice system and remains a common occurrence in South Africa (SA). The high rate of recidivism is a serious problem that not only affects the offender and his immediate family, but also other vulnerable groups in society, as well as the government. Different scholars, such as Schoeman 2010: 91; Gould 2010:14; Urahn 2011:7 and Dissel 2012:6 offer some of the different definitions of recidivism, but they all focus on the term's common attributes - reoffending, re-arrest, re-conviction and re-incarceration. There is no common consensus on the definition of recidivism in SA (Padayachee & Smit 2012:3), however, a concise conceptualisation of recidivism is critical for an informed understanding of this study. Recidivism refers to a person's relapse into criminal behaviour, often after the person has received sanctions or undergone intervention for a previous crime (National institute of Justice, 2014:1). Recidivism is similarly explained as an individual's inclination to revert to a previous mode of behaviour, especially, relapse into criminal behaviour (Reintegration and aftercare strategy for Probation Services, 2015:8). Additionally, Dissel (2012:6) states that recidivism also embraces the technical violation of a parole. According to the National Institute of Justice (2014:1) recidivism is "measured by criminal acts that resulted in re-arrests, re-conviction or return to prison with or without a new sentence, during a three-year

period following the prisoner's release". There is a lack of consensus on the precise definition of recidivism, especially when studies seek to examine the time period over which a person becomes a recidivist - whether it is upon rearrests, when he has been convicted or when he has been sentenced (Dissel, 2012:6). For the purpose of this study, recidivism refers to a repeated unlawful behaviour or criminal reoffending, which lead to arrest, trial, conviction and sentence; it also includes the technical violation of parole conditions which led to the revocation of parole. Recidivism is synonymous to "reoffending" as the latter term refers to the act of repetitive criminal behaviour, which leads to re-arrest and reconviction (Lekalakala, 2016:33). The concept "recidivism" is used interchangeably with reoffending in this study.

Recidivism is a serious problem which confronts societies and governments throughout the world. Stephens and Nel (2014:115) concede that recidivism is prevalent across all nations in the world and it has a negative impact on the social and economic domains of life. The social and economic costs of the offenders' futile constant reintegration are a concern for policymakers worldwide; the reality of the situation is that it siphons direct and indirect resources from the community (Yorgancioglu, 2018:2). Baffour and Zawada (2012:73) also concur that recidivism is not only a phenomenon that threatens the safety of the society, but is an economic concern that costs the state heavily in terms of - security systems, justice system and correctional systems. Accordingly, Yorgancioglu (2018:2) indicates that reoffending compromises the safety of the community as it increases the statistical rate of crime. The United Nation Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) (2012:7) maintains that recidivism generates social costs upon the victim and the community. The researcher's practical personal observation reveals that recidivism costs the South Africa government in the form of social security grants, as the Department of Social Development has to pay grants, such as Child Support and Foster Care for the children of re-offending inmates; recidivism can be seen as a violation of societal values and norms and an attack on family values. Recidivism is further perceived as a personal and an individual psychological phenomenon in that it depicts the offender as one who

is unable to overcome the factors that push him into crime (Baffour and Zawada, 2012:73). Additional observations reveal that recidivism shows a low sense of assertiveness of the offender and a trait of careless about the rights of others.

UNODC (2012:7) acknowledges that recidivism continues to soar globally, and this is confirmed by data from individual countries even though there are no collective global statistics for recidivism. There are clear indications that many offenders, after completing their sentence, fail to abstain from crime and to reintegrate into their communities (UNODC, 2012:7).

Recidivism is mostly prevalent in the adult male population. Tracking studies conducted by the United State Bureau of Justice Statistics (USBJS), for nine years from 2005 to 2014 on 401,288 released offenders in 30 states, revealed that an estimated 9 in 10 (89%) of re-offenders were adult males; eighteen percent were aged 24 or younger at time of release, 51% were between the ages of 25 to 39, and 31% were 40 or older (Alper, Durose and Markman 2018:2). Studies conducted in Nigeria have documented that 81% of male offenders and 45% of female offenders were re-arrested within 36 months of discharge from prison custody (Otu, 2015:137). South Africa seems to be following the same pattern of recidivism, which is dominated by adult male re-offenders as informed by observation at Thohoyandou Correctional Centre. The Department of Correctional Services (DCS) annual report in South Africa (SA) 2018/2019 revealed a total of 112 190 sentenced adult males against 2 957 sentenced females (Department of Correctional Services Annual Report 2019:47). These given statistics of sentenced offenders paint a picture of the high rate of recidivism since most of the convicts are said to be relapsed offenders as confirmed by the interviewed social workers in the correctional centres. These given figures may be used to give estimates of recidivism rate in SA since there are no concrete recidivism statistics in the DCS annual reports. The given statistics show that recidivism is high among adult male offenders.

Recidivism is a global problem affecting every continent in the world and a synopsis from other countries to reflect that recidivism is a global challenge is presented. Information gathered revealed that the rate of recidivism in the United State of America (USA) is unacceptably high. To shed light on this, USBJS reports that recidivism rates of prisoners released in 30 states from 2005 to 2010 demonstrate that 3 out of every 4 prisoners released are rearrested within five years of their release date. Significantly, those prisoners released were rearrested for offences like - property crimes at 82.1%, drug offences at 76.9% and violent offences at 71.3% (Durose, Cooper & Snyder, 2014).

A better understanding of the phenomenon is imperative in order to develop an efficient and effective problem-solving mechanism to deal with the issue. As an intervention mechanism, the US Department of Justice keeps a central register of inmates who reoffended. Alper, Durose and Markman (2018:1) outlined in the 2018 updated USBJS, that most of the inmates reoffended in their first year of release from prison. The unavailability of official data in South Africa (SA) is a serious concern mainly because available data would help to inform the government's intervention in addressing the phenomenon. Available data on recidivism may be useful in policy evaluation and program development aiming to curtail the high rate of recidivism. Figure 1.1 below visually confirms the findings of the USA tracking study conducted on released inmates for nine years (from 2005-2014) after their release from prison.



**Percent of prisoners released in 30 states in 2005 who were arrested since release, by year after release**

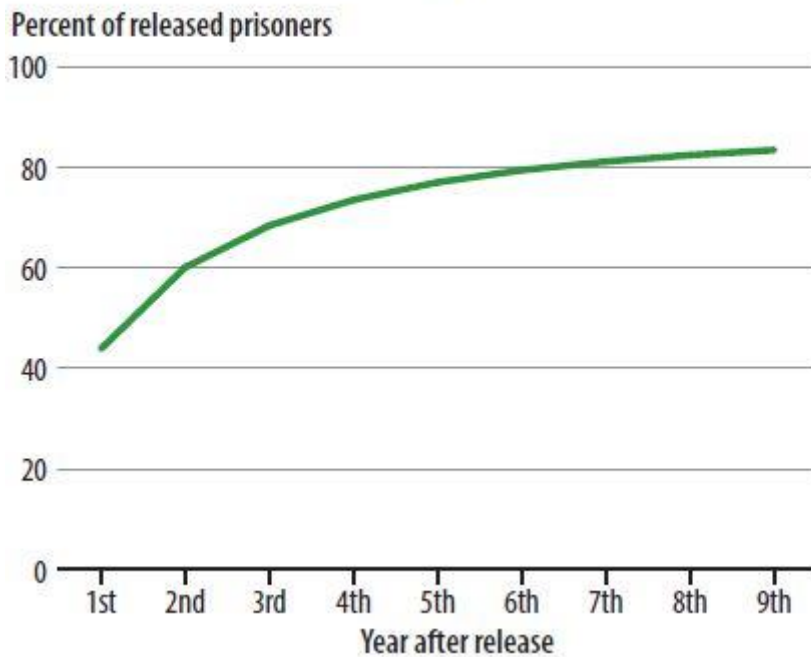


Figure 1.1: The recidivism rate of prisoners after release traced for nine years from 2005 -2014 by USBJS. Source: Alper, Durose and Markman, 2018:4

The Figure above shows that a cumulative arrest percentage among released offenders increased by 15 percentage points when the follow-up period was extended from three years to nine years. The Figure above enumerate that sixty-eight percent of released offenders were arrested for new crimes, three years after release, while 79% of released offenders were arrested after six years following release. At the end of the 9-year follow-up period, the percentage of offenders arrested after release increased to 83% (Alper, Durose & Markman, 2018:4). This information amplifies the fact that the recidivism rate is high in the United States. It is significant that the USA government is setting up measures to address these undesirable statistics as is informed by the State establishing tracking studies. In SA, academics and researchers rely on what the Probation Officers (PO) report within the Department of Social Development (DSD) and Social Workers from DCS since these offices offer offender rehabilitation and treatment programmes. This is because there is no official data on

recidivism in the country. The DSD Social Crime prevention national directorate has taken a lead in developing a national data base of children in conflict with the law who have reoffended, one would wish, therefore, that the DCS could also follow suit as this initiative can inform an effective mechanism for dealing with the problem of recidivism in the country.

The high rate of recidivism is, equally, a notable problem in Brazil. According to the UNODC (2012:7), Brazil recorded 500 000 inmates of recidivism in seven federal states; this was the results of commission by the National Council of Justice in early 2012. Similarly, The United Kingdom (UK) is among the countries which are faced with the shadow of recidivism, although, figures from the UK are not higher comparable to those from other countries. The Ministry of Justice in the UK (2012) outlined the following recidivism rate over a two-year assessment period, per each state: Scotland 42%, Ireland 40%, Northern Ireland 43% England and Wales 53%. The rate of recidivism is also a concern in Norway as revealed by the statistics that it ranges from 14% to 42% depending on whether the sample included those arrested, convicted or imprisoned (Anderson & Skardhamar, 2014).

Recidivism is also a problem in Africa, and is perceived as the norm with most African prisoners (Bello, 2017:22). Recidivism has become a major social problem affecting the society, governments, multinationals and humanitarian organisations in Sub-Saharan African countries, like Morocco, Sudan, Libya and Algeria (Osayi 2013:1). Recidivism has remained a mammoth challenge affecting Zimbabwe and the rate of reoffending is ever increasing (Kanhukamwe, 2015:14). According to Oruta (2016:117), Kenya is projected as having about two thirds of recidivism rate, and this means that two thirds of released inmates are rearrested after their release from prisons.

The notion of recidivism is a common phenomenon among inmates in the Nigerian prisons. Accordingly, Otu (2015:136) indicates that the Nigerian prison system is witnessing an enormous increase in offenders relapsing into criminal activities. Studies

conducted in Nigeria have chronicled 81% of male offenders and 45% of female offenders were re-arrested within 36 months of discharge from prison (Otu, 2015:137). Ugwuoke (2015:1) echoed this rate of recidivism where he indicated that a large chunk of released offenders in Nigeria return to prison within two years of their released. Nigeria and SA seem to be following an identical pattern of recidivism which is dominated by adult male re-offenders as is informed by the researcher's observation at Thohoyandou Correctional Centre.

As presented by Jules-Macquet (2014:19), SA has experienced an unacceptable rate of recidivism into the prison system and Schoeman (2010: 81) reveals that, although, SA has no official statistics of recidivism, the rate of recidivism could be anything from 55-97%; Ngabonziza and Singh (2012: 87) suggest recidivism rates of either 94% or between 85 and 94%. A study conducted by Brown (2011:332) suggest that about two thirds of released offenders re-enter prison within a three-year period; this is echoed by Lekalakala (2016: iv) who maintain that there is an unacceptably high rate of crime and recidivism in SA. One may challenge the accuracy of these estimates which were obtained through academic studies but the high rate of recidivism in the prison system remains a concerning issue in SA. The most serious challenge remains the fact that SA government has no official statistics of recidivism because it is unclear which government department should maintain these figures, as recidivism may cover all offenders and not just the current inmates. Jules-Macquet (2014:19) points out that different departments use different data management protocols which are not synchronized; in addition, the Department of Correctional Services Annual Reports 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2019 do not outline recidivism statistics and trends.

Recidivism is a long-standing problem in SA. Researchers such as Pelser and Rauch 2001 in Lekalakala (2016:120) acknowledge that recidivism is a huge challenge in SA which, if not tackled thoroughly, would increase drastically; they estimated the rate as between 80 – 90%. Schoeman 2013 adds that SA rate of recidivism is estimated between 55 and 95%. The upsurge in the rate of recidivism continues, despite some of the government's intervention mechanisms. This observation is supported by Karrim

(2018) who alluded that research findings by academics in SA amply show that recidivism is at an all-time high of 90% and that most offenders return to prison in less than six to twelve months because they are unable to successfully reintegrate into the community. A number of conducted research studies, such as those by Schoeman (2013), Clear (2010:2) and Thinane (2010:1) confirm that the rate of recidivism is escalating in SA despite the available intervention strategies including those proposed by DCS National cabinet “Lekgotla” of 2002. The programmes that were introduced seem futile or not doing enough for the reduction of this high rate of recidivism; it is also an indication that the government is not well informed about the contributory factors of recidivism.

The high rate of recidivism significantly contributes to prison overcrowding, which in turn negatively affects the ability of the SA correctional system to rehabilitate and secure offenders (Department of Correctional Services Annual Report, 2018:9). Statistics obtained from the 2017/2018 Annual Report of the Department of Correctional Services attests to prison overcrowding. It shows a record of the average number of inmates within the DCS system at 160 583 against the 118 723 approved bed space during 2017/18 financial year (Department of Correctional Services Annual Report, 2018:9). One challenge is that the annual reports of the DCS are silent about the rate of recidivism and no other government department has investigated this phenomenon. There might be other mechanisms to keep track of recidivism rates, however, the researcher had observed that DCS reintegration programmes do not have a tracking tool that could be utilised to trace discharged offenders for a specific defined period, as is the current practice in the Department of Social Development. Offenders, hence, easily fall into the cracks once they are discharged from the rehabilitation programme; this is confirmed by the situation in Thohoyandou Correctional Centre and Sibasa Community Correctional Centre. Dissel (2012:49) recommends that effective tracking mechanisms need to be developed and put in place to assist in documenting the rate of recidivism.

The high rate of recidivism is a significant concern for policymakers, criminologists, and those involved in corrective services (Oruta, 2016:117). Urgent intervention is needed, as recidivism consequently leads to high rate of prison influx, disturbs social order and is over-dependent on state resources. Undoubtedly every government strives to fight against the high rate of recidivism, disturbed social order and to build a welfare state, but the relevant question is - *What should inform an effective approach?* Certainly, the fundamental point rests in the understanding of contributory factors of the phenomenon (recidivism) since they would inform the proper intervention strategies. The lack of improvement in this area is a concerning issue to those vested with the responsibility as it impacts negatively on the development of the country, especially, if policy-makers have no data to refer to when developing policies to address the phenomena. Recidivism continues to be a concern since the available mechanism seems not to be doing enough to reduce it. Research on recidivism, therefore, is pivotal and is an area in which social work researchers should focus on, especially, those in the probation services and social workers working in the criminal rehabilitation centres.

The high rate of recidivism is a global phenomenon, as mentioned earlier. Lack of official data on recidivism is a concerning challenge as was also observed by the UNODC (2012:7). SA has a high rate of recidivism which is not officially documented but only outlined by the conducted academic studies. This high rate of recidivism is dominated by adult male re-offenders as observed in the correctional centre. Factors that contributed to male adults reoffending, however, seem not extensively explored in SA as is articulated by the lack of recidivism data in the DCS's annual reports and that of other departments. The available mechanism to address the challenge of recidivism, also appears not to be doing enough to reduce this high rate. The Minister of Justice and Correctional Services, Ronald Lamola, acknowledges that the SA prison system is chaotic and needs to be reformed to enable effective rehabilitation of offenders (Mailovich, 2019).

## **1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT**

The high number of cases of recidivism in South Africa, particularly, in the Vhembe District where the researcher worked for more than a decade as PO, has been a concern. There are no official statistics indicating exact numbers, however, it is clear that recidivism in SA impacts negatively on the ability of the correctional system to render effective rehabilitation services to offenders. Due to lack of scientific data and statistics, both government and private organisations find it difficult to reduce the mounting rate of recidivism. The average number of inmates within the Department of Correctional Services (DCS) System was recorded at 160 583 against the 118 723 approved bed space, during the 2017/18 financial year (DCS annual report 2018:8). The problem of overcrowding in the SA correctional centres has been identified as also due to recidivism; this negatively affects the ability of the SA correctional system to rehabilitate and to secure offenders (Department of Correctional Services, 2018:9). The Minister of Justice and Correctional Services (JCS) contends that overcrowding is the most vexing challenge facing the Department as it stretches resources and hampers the efforts of rehabilitation (DCS annual report 2019:18).

Preliminary investigations and analysis of the list of compiled pre-sentence reports done with social workers from Thohoyandou Correctional Centre and Sibasa Community Correctional Centre revealed that male adults top the list of re-offenders. The DCS (2019:46) annual report also confirms that adult-male offenders are topping the list of the offenders, as it recorded a total of 112 190 sentenced male offenders against 2 957 sentenced female offenders; the challenge is that the annual report is silent about the rate of recidivism.

Recidivism leads to devastating social costs to the communities and families of offenders, as well as personal costs to the offenders themselves. There appears to be far less easily quantifiable or indirect costs to society, such as those borne by the victims of these crimes, those associated with lost economic and community capacity, or through ex-offenders relying on social grants rather than economically contributing

to society (Yorgancioglu, 2018:1). As noted earlier, the high rate of recidivism in SA is expensive since the government foots the bill for the arrest, case investigation, court trial, supplementary reports from expert witnesses and offender treatment or sentence. Identifying the contributory factors to recidivism is with the intention of providing relevant government departments and stakeholders with scientific research data which may serve as a means of allocating resources effectively and efficiently to reduce this undesirable rate of recidivism, which culminates in devastating social ills.

SA is confronted with a serious challenge of having no available data on recidivism that show the trends and patterns over time, therefore, factors that influence recidivistic behaviour in adult male offenders are not documented in SA. This situation poses a challenge in developing and improving the effectiveness of policies and programmes that seek to address recidivism behaviour, such as adult diversion programmes for those in conflict with the law. This is because effective programmes and policies have to address the root causes of recidivism (contributory factors of recidivism) and such intervention programmes must be informed by scientific research findings.

A number of research studies on recidivism have been conducted in SA, however, none of the study focused on the factors contributing to recidivism of adult male offenders. There is, therefore, a gap to be filled in order to holistically understand recidivism and its contributory factors, particularly, for adult male offenders in SA who significantly dominate the figures of the re-offenders (Cronje, 2012:4). Based on the information provided, the problem statement therefore was “the inability to address recidivism which leads to high influx of prison inmates and an increase in social ills in SA”.

### 1.3 RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

The researcher is a <sup>2</sup>Probation Services Specialist (PSS) who has been in the field since 2004. Probation Services focus on social crime prevention. Some of the duties of the POs, as outlined in Probation Services Act no 116 of 1991 (SA 1991: Section 4), are to conduct investigation and assessment of the circumstances of a convicted person, the compiling of a pre-sentencing report, the recommendation of an appropriate sentence and the provision of evidence before a court of law. The recommended sentence is generally informed by the offender's risk assessment findings and this helps to deter the offender from reoffending. Another role of the PSS is to monitor probationers and facilitate rehabilitation programmes. The trend is that most of the cases referred for pre-sentence evaluation were for adult male offenders who had a record of re-offending. Most of them were inmates who have been subjected to various rehabilitation programmes but continue to re-offend. Some were given non-custodial sentences, with the views of not wanting to expose them to hardened criminals but they still continue to re-offend. SA criminal courts are constantly dealing with the same offenders as observed from the referrals for pre-sentence report.

From the data gathered during pre-sentence reports, investigations and assessments, the researcher developed some perceptions on the contributory factors on recidivism among male adult offenders. This anecdotal evidence, however, had not been tested through objective scientific research, hence, the researcher decided to conduct a qualitative study on the factors that contribute to recidivism among male adult offenders. Experience with recidivism, together with the observed challenges, further prompted the researcher to get an in-depth understanding of the factors that contribute to adult males' re-offending behaviour. Furthermore, the researcher as a PSS is expected by the court to display expert knowledge in social matters by providing sound

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<sup>2</sup> Probation service has been declared a specialized field in Social Work by the minister of Social Development and competent social workers (Probation Officers) in this field are declared Probation Services Specialist so is the researcher (Social Service Regulations for Probation Speciality, 2013:gazzete 36156).



evaluations and recommendations which could assist the offender to refrain from re-offending behaviour. This is only possible from a research into the factors contributing to recidivism. Lekalakala (2016:33) asserts that the rate of recidivism is likely to keep on occurring until the contributory factors to recidivism are identified, evaluated and addressed, therefore, recommends research that seek to understand the causes and contributory factors to recidivism. This recommendation also spurred the need for this study.

The findings of this study are anticipated would help POs to have a better understanding of the risk factors that contribute to re-offending behaviour. Social workers who in the DCS could benefit from the findings of the study as it strives to provide a holistic picture of the factors that contribute to recidivism and this findings could influence assessment and overall management of adult offenders. The findings could also serve as foundation guides for rehabilitation and reintegration service providers, who may use this study to provide more inclusive reintegration and rehabilitation services to offenders which would generate a positive impact on offender's behaviour, leading to a reduction in the rate of recidivism. Furthermore, the findings of this study are set to help policy makers develop relevant policies that would respond to the identified contributory factors of recidivism in male adult offenders.

This study is further justified by the recommendations of the previous studies conducted around the world which advocate the need for suitable care for released offenders to avoid the re-arrest, which usually occurs within the first years after release (Oruta, 2016:118); these high rates of recidivism mean an increase in the number of victims of crime, and more pressure on the criminal justice system. Lattimore, Steffey, and Visser (2010:253) emphasize that "providing individuals with comprehensive, coordinated services based on needs and risk assessments could result in improved post-release outcomes." This approach could help decrease the undesirable high rate of recidivism because it enables individual attention as informed by the risk assessments conducted on recidivism.

## **1.4 RESEARCH QUESTION, GOAL AND OBJECTIVES**

The ensuing section focuses on the research question, goal, and objectives of the study.

According to Doody and Bailey (2016:19), the first steps of any study entail developing the research question, aims and objectives. Parahoo (2014:14) explains that subsequent steps flow from these and they govern the researcher's choice of population, setting, data collected and period for the study. Clear, succinctly posed research questions, aims and objectives are essential if studies are to be successful (Doody & Bailey, 2016:19).

The research question aims and objectives should ensure that there is a thread that connects the three aspects. The research begins with a question, followed by what the researcher wants to achieve, which is to seek answers to the initial question asked and such is guided by objectives. The research question, research goal and objectives of the study are discussed in detail below:

### **1.4.1 Research question**

Research questions are specific ones that are developed from the purpose of the study which the researcher seeks to answer. Such questions are typically developed before the identification of the research methodology (Creswell, 2012:110). The research question seeks to address issues emanating from the research problem statement (Du Plooy-Cillier, Davis & Bezuidenhout, 2017:69). O'Brien and Desisto (2013:83) add that a well-constructed research question must be pertinent, achievable, focused, and ethical; above all, it must be researchable.

A research question helps the researcher to refine the focus of the phenomenon, and to anticipate relevant data that would address the purpose of this study. The main research question is:

*What are the factors that contribute to recidivism among adult males?*

#### **1.4.2 Research goal**

Every study conducted is intended to achieve a specific goal. According to Polit and Beck (2008:74) a research goal formulates the broad direction of the investigation. The concept “research goal”, refers to a clear, explicit statement of the problem, which is crafted to specifically and precisely answer the research questions (Leedy & Ormrod, 2013:3). Krueger and Neuman in De Vos, Strydom, Fouche and Delport (2014:94) outline a research goal as having three main aims: to explore the selected research topic, to describe a topic and to explain certain concepts. A research goal enables a researcher to understand the purpose or motive of the study and what the researcher wants to achieve as outcome of the study.

The goal of this study is as follows:

- To develop an in-depth understanding of the factors contributing to recidivism among adult male offenders.

#### **1.4.3 Research objectives**

The research objectives guide how the goal of the study is to be accomplished (Moule & Goodman 2014:80). According to Grove, Burns and Gray (2013:708) research objectives are steps that must be observed accordingly to achieve the stated goal. Research objectives should contain action words that reflect activities to be carried out, for example, “to explore” or “to describe” a phenomenon (Du Plooy-Cilliers, Davis & Bezuidenhot, 2017: 98). In simple terms, objectives are the steps executed by the researcher to achieve the desired goal. Good objectives should be qualified by the SMART principle. SMART is an acronym of five elements operationalized as follows: S= Specific, M=Measurable, A=Attainable, R=Relevant and T=Time based (Zahorsky, 2019). Objectives, therefore, guide the researcher on how to realize the research goal. The following research objectives guided this study:

- To explore the factors that contribute to recidivism among adult male offenders.

- To describe as findings the factors contributing to recidivism among adult male offenders.
- To draw conclusions about the factors contributing to recidivism and make recommendations thereof, for reducing recidivism growth.

## **1.5 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Personal integrity and self-control are crucial traits in the upholding of ethics in research. Du Ploy-Cilliers *et al.*, (2017:262) indicate that personal integrity ensures that the researcher adheres to ethical principles and professional standards that are crucial in conducting research. Ethics are defined as, a set of standards binding a researcher's attitude and behavior; these are guided by morality or professional code of conduct (Du Ploy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2017:262). For De Vos *et al.*, (2014:114), ethics refers to a collective of moral principles which is proposed and widely accepted by a group or institutions, which subsequently offers rules and behavioural expectations about the most correct conduct towards stakeholders in research, such as - researchers, participants, employers, sponsors, assistants and students. Ethics refer to the moral integrity of the researcher (Nayak, 2015:304).

In this study, the researcher upheld the following research ethics in order to sustain personal integrity and self-control which are crucial traits in conducting a research: informed consent, confidentiality and anonymity, no deception of the participants, data management and minimizing harm and debriefing.

### **1.5.1 Informed Consent**

According to Lichtman (2014:59), research participants have to be given information about the study which includes - nature of the research, the extent to which they can make an informed choice as to whether they want to participate or not and whether they were coerced into participating. Informed consent has to do with giving the participants adequate information of the study which include - clear articulation of the study goal, expected duration of participation in the study, investigation procedure to

be followed, possible advantages, disadvantages and credibility of the researcher (Royse, William, Tutty & Grinnell in De Vos *et al.*, 2014:117). For Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, (2017:264), informed consent has to be done formally to afford participants the opportunity to give their decision. Informed consent include, defining the role of the participant, any risk or benefits for participating in the study and the identification of the researcher and sponsorship (Thomas, 2017:46). Lichtman (2014: 59) cautions that this information must be conveyed in a simple and understandable way.

The researcher understands that the seeking of consent is a democratic practice of affording the participants an opportunity to make their own informed decision and respecting the right of choice instead of coercing the participant. The researcher has transparently outlined the purpose of the study, including the time factor of participating in the study, the use of a digital recorder and possible consequences which they might endure through their participation; this information was covered in the consent form developed by the researcher. Voluntarily, the participants signed the informed consent letter to show that they are taking part in the research study freely, and that they were not coerced. The letter also guaranteed confidentiality for the participants' information. The researcher further informed participants that the interviews may run for an hour, depending on the depth of information needed and they will be conducted at a place which is convenient for the participant. The researcher disclosed to the participants that they will receive no incentives for their participation and that the collected data will be used for academic purposes. Additional consent from the participants for publication of the research findings was requested and granted. The following rights were outlined to the individual participants:

- Right to withdraw from the study at any given time;
- Right to seek clarification or more information concerning the study;
- Right to contact UNISA administrative body if the conduct of the researcher is questionable.

### **1.5.2 Confidentiality and anonymity**

Confidentiality and anonymity are part of the primary focus of research ethics which have to do with protecting the participants and their identity (Chambliss & Schutt, 2013:53). It is the researcher's responsibility to ensure that the collected data and its sources remain confidential (Silverman, 2013:162). Babbie (2013:35) takes it further to indicate that the most crucial aspects in promoting confidentiality and anonymity is to protect the participant's identity. Disclosure of the information is the inherent right of the participant and it is not the researcher's prerogative to decide when, where, to whom and to what extent should this right to privacy be waved away (De Vos *et al.*, 2014:19). The researcher assigned number to the participants' data to ensure that they remain anonymous (Thomas, 2017:45).

The researcher also ensured proper management of the collected data to avoid any inferences being made; to achieve this, participants were assigned identification numbers. The researcher adhered to the principle of confidentiality and anonymity throughout the study and even after the completion of the study, with the view of protecting the participants from any harm. The researcher also ensured that the electronic data were not posted or deposited on the internet, instead the researcher saved the information on a hard drive, encrypted the documents with password and kept them away from the public.

### **1.5.3 Deception of participants**

Deception involves a situation where the researcher withholds information from participants, misleads participants and misrepresents the facts, to lure participants after realizing that they could possibly refused to form part of the study (Corey *et al.*, in De Vos *et al.*, 2014:18). Deception usually happens when a researcher tells the participants the general purpose of the study without telling them the specific objectives (Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2017:268; Babbie, 2013:38). With this study, the researcher honestly disclosed details to the participants and did not tell any falsehood about the purpose of the study; this included the disclosure of the researcher's

personal identity. The general purpose of the study was outlined to the participants and the researcher went further to tell them specifically what he was looking for and how he intended to achieve the aims of the study. Participants were informed that the aims of the study were to be achieved through the process of interviewing them. Disclosing the clear purpose of this study did not have any undue influence or hindrance in the data collection since the study was not about participant observation where the researcher may have had to disguise himself.

#### **1.5.4 Data management**

It is the primary responsibility of the researcher to manage all the collected information and to ensure that it is safely stored in a way that promote confidentiality and anonymity of the participants (Hennink, Hutter & Bailey, 2011:72; Thomas, 2017:46). Correspondingly, William (2015:114) indicates that collected data must be destroyed after the completion of the study. It is crucial that the researcher should have a good data system to manage and organise interviews data, otherwise, it becomes difficult to manage information about places, people, events and reflections (Aurini, Health & Howells, 2016:113).

The researcher has kept all the original hardcopies including signed consent form, written notes and transcripts in a file identified by him only and stored in a lockable cabinet. All electronic data were saved in the researcher's personal computer which is password protected and backup information has been stored in the hard drive which is also password protected. The researcher did not store or deposit information in the internet to avoid hacking of information. All recordings on the voice recorder, notes and transcripts were destroyed after the completion of the research. The researcher informed participants, beforehand, that the findings of the research are going to be published in a written form for academic purposes and they were assured that they will remain anonymous.

### **1.5.5 Minimizing harm and debriefing**

The process of research may trigger psychological distress in the participants, and it is the researcher's responsibilities to ensure that participants receive the necessary emotional attention (Tamin, 2013:3), therefore, the researcher should closely observe the participants in order to identify any distress that may develop as a result of participating in the conducted study (David & Sutton, 2011:49). It is important to realise that harm can be experienced emotionally or psychologically resulting in feelings of shame or embarrassment (Hennink, Hunter & Bailey, 2011:67). For this reason, David and Sutton (2011:49) advise that debriefing should be provided to the participants in a study dealing with sensitive issues that have the potential to evoke distress. Debriefing refers to the activity of dealing with the emotions as they come up during the interview (Hennink et al., 2011:75). Accordingly, Hennink et al. (2011:75) indicate the following four options for debriefing: conducted by the researcher, conducted by another professional (such a social worker), conducted by a lay person attached to the organisation responsible for administering the treatment and lastly, conducted by an external professional person. Chambliss and Schutt (2013:45), explains that the norm for debriefing requires the researcher to inform the participants about the study's purpose, method and also to evaluate their personal reaction to the study.

The researcher provided individual counselling to the participants before starting with the interview; the aim of the counselling was to alert participants about the emotional feelings and harm which may be triggered by the interview processes. The researcher also utilised the service of a social work supervisor who volunteered to conduct debriefing sessions for the participants who required the service.

## **1.6 CLARIFICATION OF KEY CONCEPTS**



### **1.6.1 Adult Male**

According to Child Justice Act 75 of 2008 (SA, 2009), an adult, refers to a person who is 18 years or older. World Health Organisation, (2013) affirms that “adult is a person older than 19 years of age unless national law defines a person as being an adult at an earlier age”. The researcher agrees with both given definition, however for the purpose of this study, an adult male referred to a masculine person from the age of 21 years onwards as justified in the delineated inclusion criteria.

### **1.6.2 Offender**

An offender is defined as a “person who is guilty of a crime”, (United Kingdom Cambridge Dictionary. 2019, sv “offender”), while the White Paper on Corrections in SA (2005), defines, an offender, as a person who has committed a criminal offence, was convicted and sentenced by a court of law. Such a person can be classified according to the number of the criminal convictions received, for example, “second offender” if he/she re-offended once or be classified according to gender or age, such as female, juvenile or adult offender. The Child Justice Act, however, refers to a child offender as “child in conflict with the law” in order to avoid stigmatizing the child.

### **1.6.3 Factors**

The Cambridge Dictionary (2019, sv “factor”), factor is defined as “the situation that influences the result of something”. For the purposes of this study factors refer to the circumstances which contribute to produce results, hence, the researcher is focusing on the circumstances or situations that influence adult male offenders to repeat criminal behaviour.

### **1.6.4 Recidivism**

Recidivism refers “to a person's relapse into criminal behaviour, often after the person receives sanctions or undergoes intervention for a previous crime. Recidivism is measured by criminal acts that resulted in re-arrests, re-conviction or return to prison with or without a new sentence during a three-year period following the prisoner's

release” (National Institute of Justice, 2014:1). Recidivism represents the problem of persistence in criminal behaviour.

James (2011:6) explains recidivism as referring to the re-arrests, re-conviction, or re-incarceration of an offender, within a particular time frame; it can also include technical violations of an offender’s parole or probation conditions. James (2011:6) extends this definition further to indicate that some scholars focus on re-incarceration with a new prison sentence as a more accurate recidivism identifier, as they argue that technical violations are really an extension of an offender’s original prison term and not a newly-committed offence. For the purpose of this study, technical violation of parole is also considered a form of recidivism.

### **1.6.5 Community Corrections**

This refers to all non-custodial measures and forms of supervision applicable to persons who are subject to such measures and supervision in the community and who are under the control of the DCS Correctional Service Act 111 of 1998 (SA 1998: chapter 1). For the purpose of this study, this refers to all offenders under community correction for various purposes, be it parole or probationer.

## **1.7 LIMITATION OF THE STUDY**

The inclusion criteria employed to sample the participants of this study limit the population of the study in that it focused on the adult male offenders within Vhembe District Municipality, although, not all adult male offenders from the municipality partook in this study.

Qualitative research is interpretative in nature, therefore findings of this study on the factors that contribute to recidivism on adult male offenders cannot be generalised to the entire population of the reoffenders.

The other limitation is that it took a lot of courage and time for the released offenders to disclose their criminal history to other people even if they have confidence; their embarrassment about being an offender and worry about future confrontations persisted. This was evident during data collection. Some participants found it difficult to disclose all their previous convictions simply because they were ashamed to list their previous convictions. Other participants were not comfortable in disclosing the exact factors that led to their re-offending because they felt what they did was uncalled for but they usually found it easy to narrate what led other people to re-offend. Nonetheless signs of easiness developed as a result of rapport-building by the researcher. Some participants were found to be still angry about their sentencing and consistently showed non-objectivity by defending themselves, constantly, during the interview session.

## **1.8 STRUCTURE OF THE RESEARCH REPORT**

### **Chapter 1: General introduction and background of the study**

This chapter outlined the introduction and general orientation to the research. The chapter covered introduction and background to the study, problem statement, rationale for the study, research question, goal and objectives, ethical considerations, clarification of concepts, limitations of the study and the structure of the study's report.

### **Chapter 2: Literature review and theoretical framework**

This chapter provide a literature review which is relevant to the study topic. The chapter further provides the theoretical perspectives that seek to provide better understanding of adult male recidivism.

### **Chapter 3: Application of the research methodology**

This chapter offers a detailed research methodology which encompasses the application of qualitative research approach, research design, population and sampling, data-collection methods and data-analysis methods.

### **Chapter 4: Research findings**

The research findings are presented and discussed in this chapter, and thereafter literature references will be applied to compare and contrast the findings. This chapter will focus on the narratives of adult male offenders on factors that contribute to recidivism.

### **Chapter 5: Summary, conclusions and recommendations from the study**

This chapter will provide a summary of the research report and also outline the overall conclusions and recommendations

## **1.9. SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER**

This chapter outlined the introduction and general orientation to the research study. The chapter begins with introduction and background of the study, problem statement, rationale for the study, research question, goal and objectives. The chapter further presents the ethical considerations, clarification of key concepts, limitations of the study and the structure of the research report.

## **CHAPTER 2:**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

#### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter presents a detailed review of literature on factors contributing to recidivism of adult male offenders. Grove, Burns and Grove (2012:93-94) state that a literature review is an extensive and systematic examination of books, publications and articles relevant to a specific research project. Previous studies conducted in the area of recidivism form part of this chapter. The literature is relevant to the interrogation of the adult male offenders as the participants in this study. The challenge is that limited research has been conducted on adult male offenders as is demonstrated in this chapter. This chapter further provides the theoretical perspectives that seek to provide better understanding of the contributory factors of recidivism among adult male offenders.

The researcher consulted academic books, articles from refereed and accredited journals, policy documents and dissertations (published and unpublished) related to the research questions outlined in this study. Several studies have been conducted on recidivism, however, the uniqueness of this study is that its focus was on adult male re-offenders.

Through literature review, the researcher obtained evidence on the methodological approaches employed by earlier studies and instruments used to examine recidivism as a challenge. This information provided the researcher with knowledge as to what had been tried, and what shortcomings might have been identified in approaches and methods used during previous research addressing recidivism. Aspects covered in this chapter include recidivism as a concept, recidivism situation in South Africa, purpose of correctional system in SA, consequences of recidivism, significance of

recidivism data base, importance of recidivism and desistance measures, risk factors of recidivism and theoretical framework, ecological system theory (EST) and then finalization through a summary of the chapter.

### **2.1.1 RECIDIVISM AS A CONCEPT**

Recidivism is one of the most significant phenomenon in criminal justice system. Its persistence challenges the efficacy of offender rehabilitation which is the fundamental principle of DCS (White Paper on Corrections, 2005:10). Several debates have been held by both local and international policymakers, practitioners, researchers and academia about whether recidivism can be considered as a measure of non-successful rehabilitation and reintegration (Padayachee & Smit 2012:1). The researchers concede that successful rehabilitation results in a low rate of recidivism and promote good social order. As noted by Albertus (2010:1), recidivism reduces the safety of communities and at times induces responses which could erode people's right to live in a state founded on human dignity, freedom and equality. Consequently, the government is under mounting pressure to urgently find solutions to crime or recidivism that will bring positive impacts in the country (Padayachee & Smit 2012:2). An understanding of the contributory factors of recidivism of adult male offenders is essential, not only from an intervention perspective but also in terms of policy development and legislation. Several authors have acknowledged that SA has no official data about recidivism that outline the trend, statistics and the factors associated with inmates continual involvement in offending behaviour after the completion of a formal correctional sentence or during a non-custodial sentence (Schoeman 2010,18; Conje & Peacock 2017:109; Lekalakala 2016; Dissel 2012). The White Paper on Corrections (2005:8), conceded that there is no official statistics of re-offending in SA. This situation seems to not have improved since the annual reports of the DCS still do not outline the trend and statistics of recidivism. The available recidivism data is the estimates informed by conducted academic studies. Additionally, recidivism data is

usually obtained from retrieved data of criminal charges or convictions (SAPS 69), which means, the actual incidence of recidivism may be underestimated. Previous conducted studies have been found to be limited in scope, thus, fail to give a holistic picture of the contributory factors of recidivism; many only focused on specific types of offences and ignore the individual narrative or outline of the contributory factors (Cronje, 2012:4; McAree, 2011:9).

The DCS has unfortunately failed to deliver on its mandate to reduce recidivism despite the introduction of the Correctional Services Act 111 of 1998 and the White Paper on Corrections of 2005 which paved a way for offenders' rehabilitation approach in South Africa (Murhula, 2019:26). As presented by Jules-Macquet (2014:19), South Africa has experienced an increasing rate of recidivism causing an influx of re-offenders into the prison system. A number of conducted research have conceded that South Africa has an extremely high rate of recidivism which is estimated to be anything between 55% and 97% (Schoeman, 2010: 81; Schoeman, 2013; Ngabonziza & Singh 2012: 87; Brown, 2011:332; Lekalakala, 2016: iv). Questioning the accuracy of this estimate figures is fruitless since there is no official data to justify these estimate, however, the fact remains that the rate of recidivism is unacceptably high in South Africa and the available intervention mechanisms seem to be not doing enough to decrease this undesirable high rate of recidivism; strategic interventions informed by scientific research findings, therefore, are essential to diminish the rate of recidivism. Correctional centres overcrowding is regarded as very challenging for the DCS. The DCS has conceded that overcrowding has significant negative influence on the ability of the Department to deliver on its new core business, however, constitutional provisions compel government to act instantly on the matter (White Paper on Corrections, 2005:12).

### **2.1.2 Recidivism situation in SA**

A vast number of convicted incarcerated offenders leave South African correctional centres and return to their families and communities. A few of these offenders

effectively reintegrate into their communities, while most of them re-offended with new or same crimes and consequently are convicted and incarcerated again (Murhula, 2019:22). There is no official documentation that confirms these findings simply because SA has a dearth of theoretical and empirical studies on recidivism and its associated factors, which include among other things, its trends, statistics and contributory factors (Cronje 2017:xi). Evidence of this is the non-inclusion of a recidivism rate report and its associated factors in the annual reports of the DCS. The DCS is the custodian of the correctional services with a fundamental focus on offender rehabilitation programmes in the country. Consistently, the White Paper on Corrections (2005:8), acknowledges that there are no official statistics of re-offending in SA. This situation seems to have not improved and the available recidivism data are estimates informed by conducted academic studies. The high rate of recidivism significantly contributes to prison overcrowding which in turn negatively affects the ability of the South African Correctional System to rehabilitate and secure offenders (Department of Correctional Services Annual Report, 2018:9).

The White Paper on Correction (2005:12) identifies correction and rehabilitation as key concepts in the new strategic direction of the Department. Reports on recidivism and its associated factors can provide a holistic picture on the effectiveness of these key concepts. The DCS focus is on offenders attending programs rather than on whether the programs have had the anticipated outcome of transforming the individuals' behaviour (Murhula, 2019:27). As noted by Murhula (2019:27), this situation further reveals that rehabilitation programs are often not effective because the DCS continue to focus more on process than results or the impact of the attended programme. Non-availability of reports on recidivism may attest to this assertion since the effective evaluation and assessment of the programme would have been able to provide trends and factors associated with recidivism.

The aim of The DCS's corrections programs is to provide needs-based correctional sentence plans and interventions to offenders, as outline in the White Paper on Correction (2005:13), but there are no well-organised programs to rehabilitate



offenders. As noted by the researcher, POs from DSD are not equipped to implement adult offender's rehabilitation programs as they apply a "one size fits all" approach. DSD which provide rehabilitation services to the probationers also do not have accredited programmes meant for adult offenders but have such programmes meant for "children-in-conflict with the law". POs apply the same programs to different offenders who committed different crimes; this practice creates more problems which result in more recidivistic behaviour.

The introduction of the Correctional Services Act 111 of 1998 and the White Paper on Corrections of 2005, cemented a way for an effective offenders' rehabilitation approach in South Africa but, regrettably, the DCS has failed to deliver on its mandate to reduce recidivism (Murhula, 2019:26). DSD also seems not to be adding enough value to the reduction of recidivism through proper effective implementation of this Act. The available DSD intervention system seems to have not succeeded in making a mark towards the empowerment of POs who are expected to facilitate rehabilitation programmes geared towards the reduction of recidivism among probationers' adult offenders. The DSD is yet to develop rehabilitation programmes for adult offenders. POs are mostly relying on their creativity which restrain them; there is a lack of coordination efforts and synchronization of the justice cluster departments which is also creating a barrier in the fight against the reduction of high recidivism statistics. Pre-sentence reports compiled by the POs which may recommend direct imprisonment (in terms of Section 276 (1)(b) or (1)(i) of the Criminal Procedure Act 51 of 1977 with attached compulsory attendance of specific rehabilitation programme as informed by the case managers' risk assessment findings of the offender) are not considered in the Correctional Centre; these may recommend the implementation of offender rehabilitation programme. The DCS conducts its own pre-assessment with no consideration of the POs' pre-sentence recommendations informed by various sources, such as significance others, authoritative and persuasive sources. This sentiment is consistent with Albertus (2010:2) who indicates that DCS correctional centres are populated by thousands of inmates whose sentences are serviced without

a clear purpose and consequently many released offenders' relapse to criminal activities. Furthermore, the government's ineffectiveness in assisting their reintegration into society as law-abiding, productive citizens, contributes significantly to the already high crime rate (Albertus, 2010:2). Dissel (2012:5), suggests that effective reduction of reoffending needs a proper implementation of the essential rehabilitation mainstay principles, known as the "what works" principles (WWP), and the utilisation of risk, need and responsivity principles (RNR). Dissel (2012:5) continues by narrating the importance RNR in assessing the offender to ensure a suitable alignment between treatment type, duration and style of the intervention. Authors like Dissel (2008) contend that the rate of recidivism in SA will remain high since there is no proper mechanism put in place to address this phenomenon.

Considering the still apparent high rate of recidivism in SA, treatment programmes have been discredited in terms of their level of effectiveness. This is due to a number of indicators, such as the increasing levels of economically-motivated contact crimes, the high level of overcrowding in correctional centres or the definition of success when evaluating the programmes (Clear, 2010:5; SAPS, 2018:21; Soothill, 2010:33). A continued inattention to scientific findings on the contributory factors towards recidivism may be read as an obvious offshoot of this inattention.

### **2.1.3 Purpose of the correctional system in SA**

The purpose of correctional system in SA is outlined by relevant legislative instrument. According to the White Paper on Corrections (2005:39) "the purpose of the correctional system in SA is not punishment, but protection of the public, promotion of social responsibility and the enhancement of human development in order to prevent recidivism or the return to crime". The White Paper on Corrections (2005:38) continues that: "[the] responsibility of the DCS is first and foremost to correct offending behaviour, in a secure, safe and humane environment, in order to facilitate the achievement of rehabilitation, and avoidance of recidivism". As presented by Smit and

Padayachee (2012:2), the goal of rehabilitation and reintegration is to deter criminal recidivism. The rehabilitation and reintegration of offenders is guided by the assumption that individuals are not perpetual criminals, and that it is possible to restore offenders to a useful life in which they can contribute to themselves and to society (Smit and Padayachee, 2012:2). The current situation revealed that the prevention of recidivism's mission is far from being accomplished since the rate of recidivism is on the increase in SA. The situation is not improving, despite the availability of instruments, such as Correctional Services Act 111 and the White Paper on Corrections that have outlined well-considered objectives to reduce re-offending (Murhula, Singh & Nunlall, 2019:34). The rate of recidivism in SA, therefore, continues to escalate despite the introduction of these national instruments that advocate for its reduction. The escalation of this phenomenon poses a challenge to both academics and government officials. There is, thus, a dire need to explore the contributory factors to recidivism in order to gain in-depth understanding that would ameliorate this problem.

The introduction of the Correctional Services Act 111 of 1998 also added value to the enforcing of offender rehabilitation programmes geared towards reducing the high rate of recidivism. Section 41 (1) of Correctional Services Act 111 of 1998 instructs that all offenders' rehabilitation centres that work under the DCS must provide programs and activities that meet the rehabilitation needs of offenders. The reduction of recidivism, however, remains a far-fetched achievement, despite the availability of this statute which mandates offender rehabilitation.

According to the White Paper on Correction (2005:38), rehabilitation is the consequence of a procedure that combines the correction of offending behaviour, human development and the promotion of social responsibility and value. The report further states that rehabilitation must not only be a strategy to avert crime but instead as a complete phenomenon combining and encouraging social responsibility and social justice to reduce recidivism. The current statistical estimate depicting the high rate of recidivism revealed that The DCS mission is far from being accomplished due

to its failure to reduce recidivism. Consequently Dissel (2012:49) suggests that a critical review of this strategy, meant to achieve the goal of successful reducing re-offending, is required in South Africa. The researcher is persuaded that there are still more factors that drive recidivism that need to be explored in order to inform a new effective approach.

#### **2.1.4 Consequences of recidivism**

It may, be unhelpful to explore the contributory factors of recidivism among adult male offenders, without considering the consequences of this phenomenon; although this study is not about recidivism in general, presentation about the consequences of recidivism enables a holistic understanding of the phenomenon and will assist in designing useful mechanism or approaches that can help to reduce the high rate of recidivism. Recidivism has become a major social, economic and psychological problem affecting the individuals, community, government and humanitarian organization. Following are discussions on observed impacts of recidivism:

SA correctional centres are witnessing enormous increase of released offenders relapsing into criminal activities (recidivism) causing the DCS annual report (2018:9) to assert that a high number of prisons are overcrowding. The high rate of re-offending (recidivism), as observed by the researcher and confirmed by the social workers in the Correctional Centres, contributes to prison overcrowding which in turn negatively affects the ability of the South African correctional system to rehabilitate and secure offenders. The DCS annual report (2018:9) attests to the average number of inmates within the DCS system at 160 583 against the 118 723 approved bed space during the 2017/18 financial year. Prison overcrowding has a negative impact on correctional centres' environment which in turn affect the rehabilitation of the offenders. This situation also led to staff shortage; this includes programme facilitators who render the core function of correctional services. Evidence gathered from the sub-cluster efficiency enhancement committee management meetings (case-flow management meetings) also attest to the high rate of prison overcrowding worsened by reoffenders;

this results in inmates living in inhumane conditions that are inconsistent with human right. This situation, together with staff shortages negatively affect the effectiveness of rehabilitation and reintegration programme which is confirmed by the high rate of reoffending. DCS is tasked to provide safe and human conditions which allow for optimal rehabilitation and reduce reoffending but overcrowding appears to be the barrier towards the realisation of this mission. Karrim (2018) proceeds further to indicate that the government invests billions of rand in prisons every year without any meaningful analysis of recidivism data which should include the contributory factors and the consequences thereafter. Dissel (2012:5) also contend that there is a growing concern from the public that the government is spending too much public money on incarcerating offenders; a trend similar to the proverbial “investing in a financial black hole”. These warnings suggest that the government is missing the point by a lack of sincere focus on the root causes of recidivism, specifically.

Recidivism has a negative impact on the economy of any country. Authors such as Stephens and Nel (2014:115) state that recidivism has a negative impact on the economic domains of life. The economic costs of the offender’s futile reintegration are significant concerns for policymakers, worldwide; recidivism siphons direct and indirect resources from the community. The government is using taxpayer’s money to maintain the criminal justice and correctional services system; these include providing food and shelter for the overcrowded inmates dominated by re-offenders (Out, 2015:140). Karrim (2018) lamented that the SA government invests billions of rand in the Correctional Centres every year. Additionally, recidivism cost the state in the form of social security grants wherein DSD is paying grants such as Child Support and Foster Care for the children of re-offended inmates. DCS is incurring the cost of funding the humanitarian NGOs that are providing after-release programmes, such as “halfway houses”, to released offenders who are dominated by re-offenders. These houses serve as transit points for offenders whose families and communities are not ready to accept them. The national director of the halfway-house project, Mr. Nesengani Azwihangwisi explains that halfway houses are managed through a service

level agreement and DCS pays a monthly stipend for operational costs. He went further to indicate that 676 offenders have been accommodated in halfway houses since 2012 (DCS electronic newsletter, 2020).

Recidivism perpetuates crime in the sense that it causes the offender to obtain a number of criminal convictions. Once a person is convicted, obtaining gainful employment becomes difficult if not impossible as the SA labour system makes it difficult for a person with a criminal record to secure a meaningful job. Dissel (2012:30) confirms that offenders experience difficulty in finding sustainable employment upon release and thereby resort to survive by criminal activities. According to Cronje (2012:43), recidivism, particularly, at an early age could result in the disruption of formal education programmes, hence, recidivism is a social problem that threatens the safety of the society

#### **2.1.5 Significance of recidivism database**

The purpose of this study is not to provide an in-depth analysis of the importance of recidivism data, although, it is important to have official data on recidivism as a country since this information should assist in curbing its high rates. Recidivism data can be used as a tool to measure the effectiveness of the offender's rehabilitation programmes and offender's post-released programmes. SA does not have a central database to capture recidivism information which should play a role in the formulation and development of policies on criminal-relapse prevention and rehabilitation programmes (Lekalakala, 2016:33). The same notion is supported by Cronje and Peacock (2017:109) who indicate that SA has a complete lack of official recidivism data. Annual reports of DSC are also silent about the trend, statistics and related matters on recidivism. This predicament justifies the need to explore the factors associated with recidivism as the findings could help to provide useful data.

It is important for the country to have a better understanding of trends and relevant matters about recidivism. SA, in particular, need this data since it is experiencing a high rate of recidivism which is not abating. This data would facilitate the development

of effective programmes that could help to curb the daunting rate of recidivism. According to Alper, Durose, and Markaman (2018:03) there is a need for studies on trends in recidivism that should focus on the following three characteristics as considered by the US Bureau of Justice study when measuring these trends:

- An early incident after release from prison.
- A measure of failure following an early incident, such as a subsequent arrest, conviction, or return to prison.
- Follow-up period that usually extends from the date of the starting event to a predefined end date, for example, 6 months, 1 year, 3 years, 5 years, or 9 years.

Consideration of these aspects enables a country to establish and configure a valuable tracking tool for the discharged offenders. The findings on trends can help in the development of relevant mechanism or approaches to address the ever-increasing rate of the phenomenon (recidivism).

#### **2.1.6 Recidivism and desistance measures**

A strategic approach to crime prevention cannot be completed without effective measures to address the problem of recidivism because high rates of recidivism reflects the ineffectiveness of the crime prevention approaches. Of great significance, recidivism and desistance have crucial roles in offender rehabilitation, crime prevention and management, because they assist in identifying predictable contributory factors of recidivism and highlights blockades to successful reintegration (Padayachee & Smit 2012:3). Effective strategies to address recidivism problems require a holistic understanding of the contributory factors of the phenomenon. Public safety is affected by the large number of crimes committed by individuals who have already faced criminal sanctions but have not yet desisted from crime (UNODC, 2012:9). Effective interventions are, therefore, required to address the problem of recidivism, in order to fulfil desistance. Desistance is defined as a long-term abstinence from criminal behaviour by an offender who had a tendency of repeated

criminal behaviour or relapsing into criminal behaviour (McNeil, Farrall, Lightowler & Maruna, 2012:3). Effective desistance does not only require the involvement of the criminal justice system, it requires involvement of families, communities, civil society and the state. Additionally, Sapouna, Bisset, Conlong and Metthew (2015:11) identify triggers for desistance which includes: the establishment of strong social bonds, a developing awareness of the negative consequences of crime, and for some individuals, the development of a good relationship with a supervisor and attendance at a rehabilitative programme. Awareness of these triggers assists to inform an effective desistance intervention approach. Positive attributes for desistance include - obtaining appropriate employment and having improved emotional well-being, however, external circumstances, such as financial problems or a failed relationship can impact negatively on desistance attempts and such can make offenders feel trapped in a criminal lifestyle (Matthew *et al.*, 2015:11).

Measures on recidivism and cessation are imperative because they offer evidence relevant to a deeper understanding of offenders' indulgence in criminal behaviour and the management of justice in a wide range of policy areas (Alper *et al.*, 2018:03). For example, law enforcement officials fascinated by the high levels of crime committed by released offenders can obtain data through the annual volume of arrests. Parole and probation agencies concerned with the involvement of various types of former offenders in criminal activities after release may focus on differences in increasing arrest percentages. Alper *et al.*, (2018:03) further indicate that treatment providers looking for measures of programme effectiveness are also likely to be fascinated with desistance patterns. Additionally, task forces and policymakers assessing the movement of criminals would be more interested in the types of new crimes that are committed by released offenders. Data on desistance measures is also crucial during offenders' risk assessment as they provide crucial information about the reoffenders.



### **2.1.7 Risk factors of recidivism**

Risk factors of recidivism refers to the factors that put offenders at risk and make it difficult for them to successfully reintegrate into society (UNODC, 2012:10). Risk factors associated with crime are inseparable from the risk factors of recidivism because the two phenomena have a process relationship. Both psychologists and criminologist agree that there are multifaceted and complicated mechanisms that contribute to crime and recidivism behaviour which are outlined by the three comprehensive models of criminal behaviours, namely, psychological, sociological and biological models (Yorgancioglu, 2018). Additionally, Yorgancioglu (2018) posit that it is easy to detach them, although, it is generally acknowledged that, all of them play a role in the interpretation of recidivism behaviour.

The government's inability to support the released offenders' reintegration into the society to become a law-abiding and productive citizens, is contributing greatly to the high rate of recidivism (Padayachee & Smit, 2012:2). This risk factor was also identified by Otu (2015:139) who noted that releasing an offender without proper after-care programmes and gadgets, such as vocational tools that enable them to be self-reliant or secure meaningful employment in the government or private sector, presages a great possibilities for his/her relapsing into criminal behaviour.

According to Padayachee and Smit (2012:4), individual offender characteristics, such as antisocial cognition is among the risk factors to recidivism which criminal justice policies and practices in South Africa have largely ignored, as they focuses on traditional risk factors, such as unemployment, unstable relationships, drugs and alcohol in seeking solutions to prevent recidivism. These cognitive schemas and faulty cognitive thinking play an important role in the pursuit of remedies for re-offending behaviour. As debated by Clark (2011:2), cognition does not cause crime or re-offending behaviour but facilitates it through individual thinking, such as is observed in the instances where individuals fail to remain resolute and succumb from personal, social and environmental pressures that contribute to criminal behaviour. Cronje

(2012:10) outlines the most commonly-accepted research results on self-esteem which perceive low self-esteem as a risk factor for recidivism behaviour. Additionally, this kind of criminal recidivism behaviour is perpetuated by aggressive behaviour which is seen as a means to enhance self-esteem and to raise in social-standing hierarchy (Cronje 2012: 50). A study conducted by Stephens and Nel (2014:115) concurs this sentiment as it revealed that most male re-offenders have low emotional intelligence and this differs according to the nature of the committed offence; low emotional intelligence has been identified as the predictor of recidivism or a risk factor which also facilitates re-offending behaviour. Psychological factors that contribute to recidivism have not previously been researched, since most of the conducted studies focus on physical factors. Employment for ex-offender may also provide the opportunity to increase social networks, psychological health, enhance self-esteem and curb ex-offender from succumbing to recidivism. As explicated by Kandala (2018:340), employment for a discharged offenders has the potential to provide increased social networks while psychological health enhances self-esteem and prevents relapse into criminal behaviour.

Low level of academic background has been found to be a risk factor that influences relapse into criminal behaviour. As noted by Cronje (2017:68), there is a common view shared by previous studies, dating as far back as the 1920s, that had established a relationship between intelligence quotient (IQ) scores and criminal behaviour. Findings of the study conducted by Cronje (2012:94) affirm the relationship between academic level and criminal behaviour, as he revealed that most of the re-offenders are people with low academic level, holding a highest qualification of either Grades five, six or seven. This sentiment was echoed by Dissel (2012:30) who indicated that offenders with no vocational and educational skills or training, experience difficulties in finding a sustainable employment after their release from correctional centres and ultimately resorted back to criminal behaviour as a means of survival. Studies conducted by Nally, Lockwood, Taiping and Knutson (2014:18), also assert that low level of formal educational attainment is an autonomous predictor of recidivism. The authors continue

that uneducated or unskilled offenders face great possibility of being unemployed after release from correctional centres due to their criminal record, deficiency in education or job skills and lack of interpersonal skills. They, consequently, are likely to become recidivists as they are unable to be financially sufficient for independent living in the community. Authors, such as Zakaria, Jaafar and Lazim (2018:8) in a study conducted in Malaysia revealed that inability to find permanent, meaningful job and failure to stabilize economic resources are key factors to recidivistic behaviour. They take it further and assert that discharged offenders face daunting barriers to employment, including legal limitations, lack of skills, education, and training. The researcher's practical experience during pre-sentence investigations illustrate that most of the re-offenders with low educational level seems to also lack good problem-solving skills and are inclined to overstress daily challenges as stressful. As such they rush their crucial decision and eventually take decisions without considering their consequences; these decisions then take them back to criminal behaviour. Some could not even justify their decisions nor are they aware of the prognosis of their decisions.

Re-offending behaviour is associated with negative or destructive peer association. As noted by Walters (2016:1160), social and peer-group pressure is one of the significant risk factor of recidivism. Theories like Social Learning broadly explain the influence of negative peer pressure, in instances where group members receive positive reinforcement for their deviant behaviour from their notorious social group. This positive reinforcement act as a stimulus for deviant behaviour which consequently led to re-offending. Peer pressure can be either developmental or destructive if not well managed. The researcher's observation is that peer pressure have no age limit, although, it is usually associated with the adolescents and or juveniles. Adults can also be the victim of destructive peer pressure.

Stigmatizing an offender or labelling him a criminal after release denies him the opportunity for behaviour modification. It was revealed that discharged offenders are confronted with a challenge of negative perceptions and being judged by the

communities in which they live, or from which they come (Mnqwazi, 2017: ii). Abadi and Tegeng (2018:4) reiterate that the negative attitude of the community towards a released offenders is a risk factor that contributes to recidivism.

The abuse of drugs and other substances is a risk factor for recidivism behaviour. Most of the offenders engaged in the abuse of drugs in order to cope with the feelings of anxiety and incompetence, emanating from experiences of social inadequacy. Abadi and Tegeng (2018:1) add that the need to commit crimes by drug addicts and alcoholics is stirred by the yearning to support their habits. Such offenders remain a high risk as they often spent short-term sentences, which deprive them of enough time for involvement in intensive rehabilitation programs.

Inadequate family support hinders an offender's successful rehabilitation and predisposes him to relapse into criminal activities. Abadi and Tegeng (2018:1) holds a view that lack of emotional attachment, lack of love and affection from family members are risk factors that contribute to re-offending behaviour.

## **2.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

As indicated by Du Plooy-Cilliers et al. (2017:37), theory is significant in any research study. A theoretical framework sharpens the mind and provides focus to the researcher. It further gives the researcher a structured framework for analysis, defining the rationale for the occurrence of the problem and identifying various aspects and their mutual relationship (Jonker & Pennink, 2010: 93). Jonker and Pennink (2010:93) elaborate that searching for a theory provides ample opportunity to tap into a body of knowledge in a specific field, hence, theorising supports the systematic examination of a problem in order to hone the research approaches to the specific problem; a theory helps researchers to be rational and more focused on the goal of the research study. It also provides a framework of how social phenomena could be understood and how research findings could be interpreted (Bryman, 2012:20). Neuman (2014:55)

substantiates that theory is a tool that enables us to understand the complexities of social life and offers us insights and suggests directions for inquiry.

The researcher selected the ecological system theory (EST) to guide this study as this theory is relevant to the aim of the study. The premise of the ecological system theory is that human behaviour is controlled by outside forces as against internal forces (the environment has a role in determining the behaviour of a person). This framework is relevant in this study because it enabled the researcher to seek a holistic understanding of the contextual factors that contribute to recidivism among adult male offenders. The researcher wanted to understand if environmental factors such as families, cultures, communities, politics and policies contribute towards recidivistic behaviour of adult male offenders. Following is an outline of the ecological system approach.

### **2.2.1 Ecological system theory (EST)**

This study employs EST to understand the contributory factors causing recidivism among adult male offenders. This is one of the classic theories which was developed by Bronfenbrenner Urie in 1979, and further enhanced in 1989 and 2002. The author believed that a person's behaviour is influenced by different environmental systems. EST helps us understand why we act the way we do in different circumstances or environments. The theory posits the dependency between man and environment (Härkönen, 2007:2). As noted by Velez-Agosto, Soto-Crespo, Vizcarrondo-Opppenheimer, Vega-Molina and Coll (2017:903), EST has become an extremely recognised and widespread theoretical framework across a diversity of disciplines in the social sciences, for many years. Bronfenbrenner (2002) was convinced that every person is influenced by five different environmental systems expounded as follows:

- **Microsystem:** This refers to the locale in which the individual lives. A person is influenced by people that he has direct contact with, like family, peers, teachers, schools and neighbourhood. According to Christensen (2010:117), the individual

is not a passive recipient of experiences in these settings, but someone who helps to construct the settings and the meanings embedded in them.

- Mesosystem: This relates to interrelationships or linkages between two or more microsystems. A person is influenced by the experiences he has with the people in the Microsystem. For example, the relationship of family experiences to school experiences, school experiences to church experiences, and family experiences to peer experiences all matter in explaining the interconnectedness of systems. A person may withdraw from his peers because he is not loved at home, for example.
- Exosystem: This involves links between a social locale in which the individual does not have an active role and the individual's immediate environment. For example, a husband re-offender's behaviour may be influenced by the wife's experiences at work.
- Macrosystem: This describes the overall societal culture in which individuals live. One's behaviour is influenced to by his own cultural values and traditions, socio-economic status, and the laws.

Chronosystem: This involves changes in people and their environments occurring across time (*chronos*). For example, attitudes to crime in the 20<sup>th</sup> century compared to present day have changed because of the influence that time has had on specific attitudes and behaviours. A person's behaviour is influenced by shifts in one's lifespan, like divorce, employment termination or death of a close family member.

The EST helps us to understand why we act the way we do in different circumstances or environments. EST, thus, deals with the web of life, at the interfaces between systems and subsystems, so that it relates to "open, self-organizing, self-regulating, and adaptive complexes of interacting and interdependent subsystems" (Neal & Neal, 2013:727). The theory suggests that human problems are derived from the mutual relationship of psychological, social, economic, political and physical forces; similarly, Ebersohn and Bouwer (2015:2) maintain that the environment that we live in

influences our behaviour. Various scholars such as Neal & Neal (2013:725) and Darling (2007:204) outline that EST operates at multi-dimensional levels, listed as micro-, meso-, exo- and macro-systems. These systemic levels are in continuous interaction with each other and they influence and affect the individual actions, responses and personal growth and development. The figure below show how these elements interact in influencing and affecting individual actions, responses and personal growth focusing on a child's development.

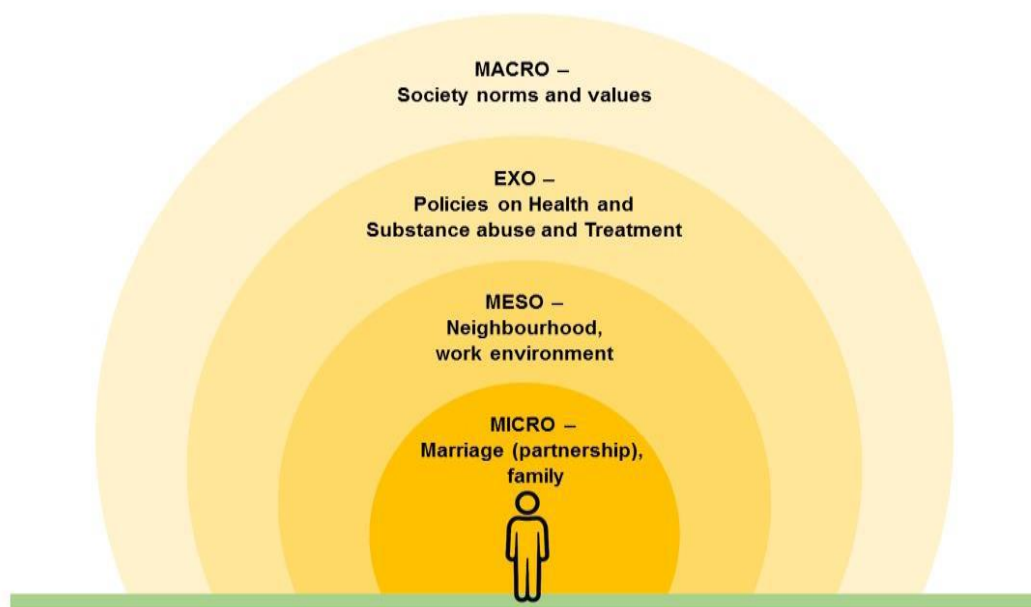


Figure 2.1: Demonstrates that Bronfenbrenner's EST places the person, and not the natural physical environment, at the centre of attention (Darling 2007:207).

Bronfenbrenner (2002) conceptualizes the environment as a set of nested structures, each inside another; each structure emphasizes a different level of influence. There is a complex interconnectedness among the levels, which are called systems. Bronfenbrenner and Morris (2006) indicate that different environments have varied

influences on a person, who in turn, responds to them in multiple ways. The ecological environment constitutes the framework within which interactions take place.

This approach accords due recognition to the transactional relationship between environmental and human conditions. This perspective permits a person to successfully understand the essentials of various systemic levels, including the individual, family, the small group, and the larger community and to reasonably develop and apply effective interventions. A practitioner can systematically shift from a clinical role to a policy and planning role within the broad framework of the ecological approach (Neal & Neal, 2013:725)

Christensen (2010:117) introduced the enhancement ecological development theory. The enhancement theory offers a tool for understanding the interaction between societal, organisational and individual dimensions. Christensen (2010:117) questions the ecological system approach for how it looks at the individual's role in relation to other actors in order to define and understand the forces underlying behavioural factors. The enhancement theory sees the individual as one who helps to create the settings and not as a passive recipient of experiences in these settings.

The EST is premised on the perception that human behaviour is controlled by outside forces as compared to internal forces. This can be best understood when looking at persons, families, cultures, communities, politics and policies. Professional intervention must focus upon strengths and weaknesses in the transactional processes between these systems. Holistic thinking provides, therefore, a paradigm for understanding how systems and their interactions could influence individual's behaviour.

EST enabled the researcher to explore how the surrounding environment contributes to recidivism behaviour among the research participants (adult male offenders). The application of this approach further assisted the researcher to explore and understand the role of five different environmental system (microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem and chronosystem) that Bronfenbrenner (2002) states as having



influence on individuals' lives. Application and interpretation of these five environmental systems enabled the researcher to have an in-depth understanding of factors that contribute to recidivism of adult male offenders. The ecological factors were systematically considered in the development of an interview guide which sought to provide answers to the research question. The theory helped to provide comprehensive insights during the data analysis.

### **2.3. SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER**

This chapter presented a detailed review of literature on factors contributing to recidivism of adult male offenders. The researcher consulted academic books, articles from refereed and accredited journals, policy documents and dissertations (published and unpublished) related to the research questions outlined in this study. The literature review begin with recidivism as a concept, the recidivism situation in SA, purpose of the correctional system in SA, consequences of recidivism, significance of recidivism database, importance of recidivism and desistance measures, as well as risk factors of recidivism. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the EST, the selected theory used to guide the study. The findings of this study will be aligned to the tenets of the EST as it was revealed that environmental factors can influence recidivistic behaviour. Evidence from the participants' storyline will be used to evaluate findings in chapter four.

## **CHAPTER 3:**

### **APPLICATION OF THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1. INTRODUCTION**

This chapter offers a detailed research methodology which encompasses the application of qualitative research approach which was guided by the following research designs: exploratory, phenomenological, contextual and descriptive, research designs. The chapter further outlined the utilized research method which details population, sampling, data collection methods and pilot testing. Thematic data analysis, the identified method of data analysis is described in this chapter. The chapter further outlined four processes of data analysis according to Lincoln & Guba in Bryman, (2012:392).

#### **3.2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

Research methodology entails an account of the precise techniques and procedures employed when conducting a research (De Vos, Strydom, Fouche' & Delport, 2014:110). A research methodology provides a theoretical and philosophical foundation for a specific study (Carey, 2012:84) and is also defined by Szilvia (2013:2) "as a way to systematically solve the research problem". Details of the research methodology are covered below and they will guide the researcher to conduct a scientific qualitative study.

#### **3.3 RESEARCH APPROACH**

The study adopted a qualitative research approach. This approach focuses on exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups attribute to a social or human problem. The approach is utilised when there is a need to hear individual

thoughts, perceptions and experiences about a phenomenon (Creswell, 2014:04). According to Du Plooy-Cilliers et al. (2017:174) qualitative research considers the in-depth human experiences of individualities and personal understanding emanating from personal experience and meanings associated with a particular phenomenon. The main purpose of the qualitative method is to discover important questions, processes and relationships, and not to test them (De Vos, Strydom, Fouche' & Delport, 2014:108). Majid (2018:01) substantiates that "qualitative research generates the narratives of individuals and groups by interacting with them, observing their behaviours, and considering how the nuances of a context may influence their perspectives and experiences".

Qualitative research approach enabled the researcher to get an in-depth understanding of male adult offenders' factors that contribute to recidivism. Through this approach, the researcher provided space for the participants to articulate and elaborate their experiences and individual perspectives about the factors that contribute to recidivism. This approach was most suitable for this study because it provided an opportunity for the researcher to develop contextual relevant findings as guided by its embedded attributes. The researcher was not interested in the statistics but in the depth of information about the factors that contribute to recidivism of adult male offenders. The researcher considered the core characteristics of qualitative research as outlined by Creswell (2014:185). Consideration of these core characteristics assisted the researcher to have a better understanding and application of the qualitative research method. Following are the characteristics:

➤ Natural setting

Qualitative research is conducted in a natural setting. This research approach does not seek to bring the participants into a laboratory, as, it was conducted in the natural setting where the issue or problem under study is being experienced. The researcher seeks to gather information directly by having a face-to-face contact with the participants or observing them in their natural setting (Creswell 2014:185). Naturalistic

settings allow for a deeper understanding of the phenomenon being studied and the development of contextually-relevant findings (Mahtani, 2004:55).

In this study the researcher interviewed participants at their places of choice which were convenient to them. All participants found it convenient to be interviewed in the comfort of their homes as the researcher gave them the liberty to choose their preferred place. The ethical principles of informed consent and confidentiality were observed. Participants were individually interviewed behind closed door in their houses, hence, they were able to restrict people from entering the interview room, in order to promote confidentiality and to avoid interruptions. This was the rationale behind the selection of the study population, otherwise, the researcher would have opted to consider inmates as his study population. The researcher opted to work with the released offenders guided by the requirements for a natural setting which indicates that interviewing the participants at their convenient places helps to make free to talk and give information which is not unduly influenced. This afforded the researcher an opportunity to interview and observe participants in their natural setting as opposed to a confined prison environment.

➤ Researcher as a key instrument

The researcher is one of the key instruments in qualitative research; the researcher is a significant tool in the process of data collection, such as interviews, observation and documents examining (Creswell 2014:185 and Creswell & Poth, 2018:43). The researcher remained the main tool in the data collection since there were no research assistants. In this study, the researcher used semi-structured, face-to-face interviews directed by interview guide consisting of open-ended questions. The interview guide was translated into Tshivenda from English, mainly because the majority of participants were Tshivenda-speaking people who preferred to use their own mother tongue. Interviews were used to explore factors contributing to adult male recidivism in Vhembe District Municipality, Limpopo Province.

➤ Multiple sources

Multiple sources can be consulted in qualitative research when gathering data, rather than a solitary data source. A researcher can rely on data collection instruments, such as interviews, observation, documents perusal and audio-visual information (Creswell, 2014:185; Lambert, Glacken & McCarron, 2013:602). The researcher relied on semi-structure, face-to-face interviews to collect data and paid attention to non-verbal clues of the study participants to establish the congruency of the information given. Literature from various authentic sources, such as articles, books, e-reserves and newspaper articles were also considered in this study.

➤ Inductive and deductive data analysis

Qualitative research data can be analyze through inductive process whereby the researcher works continuously to identify the main themes and a comprehensive set of sub-themes were established (Creswell, 2014:186). Collected data were analyzed by identifying themes generated during the interviews. A total of five themes and fourteen sub-themes were identified by the researcher during the data analysis. The supervisor also read through the transcripts to confirm the themes the researcher had identified.

➤ Participants' meanings

Qualitative research relies on participants' meaning. The primary focus of researcher in a qualitative research is to try to get the participant's understanding about a phenomenon or problem under study, not to express the literature or the researcher's own understanding (Creswell, 2014:186 and Maree, 2012:51). The researcher, thus, depended on gathered literature knowledge and the collected data of adult male re-offenders about the factors that contributed to their recidivism behaviour.

➤ Emergent design

This research process is emergent, in the sense that all phases of the research process may change at any time for better data. This may include change of question,

data collection method and modification of the participants' inclusion criteria (Streubert-Speziale & Carpenter, 2007:21; Creswell, 2014:186). The key issue is for the research to be able to produce information. The researcher, thus, was flexible and open for any change as would be informed by the observed need, however, there was no change from the initial research methodology and approach.

➤ Reflexivity

Qualitative research is reflexive, meaning that the researcher's personal background, culture, and experiences can influence the interpretation and shaping of the study. Reflexivity does not mean that the researcher has to ignore his biasness, although, no researcher is required to articulate and reflect upon his "position and subjectivity" (Sutton & Austin, 2015:226). The researcher did not anticipate that his values, culture, experience and belief would influence him during the process of data analysis and interpretation.

➤ Holistic in nature

Qualitative research is holistic in nature as it endeavors to create a global picture of the issue or problem under study. It focuses on many factors involved in the situation and reports on multiple view points (Creswell & Brown in Creswell, 2014:186). Streubert-Speziale and Carpenter (2007:21) also note that qualitative research describes the phenomenon being studied in a holistic manner taking into consideration the fact that it is contextually-situated. The researcher was guided by the ecological system theory to explore different factors that contribute to recidivism behaviour of male adult offenders, particularly - community environmental aspects, interpersonal, psychological and economic aspects.

### **3.4 RESEARCH DESIGN**

Research design refers to the complete plan for connecting the conceptual research problems to the achievable pragmatic research (Van Wyk, 2012:04). This definition is

also supported by Sizilvia (2011:24) who explains that a research design is a conceptual framework steering a scientific research. Cooper and Schindler, 2001 as quoted in Sizilvia (2011:24) added that a research design covers aspects such as the control of variables, time scopes, research atmosphere and participants' perceptions. A research design also refers to a flexible set of expectations and thoughts leading to specific contextualised procedures that connect theoretical concept and elements to develop strategy of inquiry supported by methods and techniques for collecting pragmatic material (Jonker & Pennink, 2010:39). The research design provided a guideline to the researcher and that made it possible to collect, analyse and verify data; these processes provided the findings on the factors that contributed to recidivism among adult male offenders. The following research designs were applied in this study:

#### 3. 4.1 Exploratory research design

Exploratory study is useful when the researcher wants to study about persistent occurrences. This is a study which is done to satisfy a researcher's inquisitiveness, the desire for better understanding and to examine the possibility of undertaking a more extensive study (Babbie, 2013:90). Sizilvia (2013:28) elucidates it as a form of research conducted for a problem that has not been clearly defined or when there are few or no previous studies to refer to. The research design is carried out with the view of gaining understandings and familiarity about a phenomenon for future investigation. Kumar, (2011:31) reiterated that exploratory research is undertaken with the objective of exploring an area where little is known or to investigate the possibilities of undertaking a particular research study.

The researcher undertook to use this research design because recidivism of adult male offender is a topic which has not been well researched in SA. SA government does not have data about recidivism that can explain the official statistics, the trend, characteristic and contributory factors of recidivism, particularly, among male adult offenders. The researcher was curious, hence, had a desire to gain in-depth

understanding of the contributory factors of recidivism and also the possibility of undertaking a more extensive study about this subject. The exploratory research design use of a “what” question enabled the researcher to gain a deeper understanding of the factors that contribute to recidivism of adult male offenders.

### 3.4.2 Phenomenological design

Phenomenological research endeavors to understand the core of a phenomenon by exploring the views and experiences of people who have gone through that phenomenon. Creswell and Poth (2018:75) indicate that the focus of the phenomenological design is to describe the common views of the participants about the experienced phenomenon. Phenomenological research is rooted in an explanation of human experience, the description of everyday life, perceiving things through the eyes of others, and outlining multiple realities (Chaouki, 2016:40). Perry (2013:263) and Finlay (2012:172) echoed that the emphasis of phenomenological research is on the personified, experiential meanings of life circumstances. The researcher managed to get first-hand information of the contributory factors of recidivism among male adult offenders that lived a life of re-offending (having a record of previous criminal conviction). This design assisted the researcher to elicit data on the adult male offenders’ lived experience about the factors that led them to re-offend.

### 3. 4.3 Contextual research design

Contextual research design is a form of qualitative inquiry in which the researcher collect data in an environment where the participant would normally feel comfortable (O’neill, 2015:1). This research design affords the researcher opportunity to focus on a specific event in a naturalistic setting in order to gain a broader understanding of the experience (Noor, 2008:1603; Burns & Grove 2010:32). It recognises that research participants are part of the environment in which they live in. The researcher interviewed the participants in their natural environments (residences) that was the rational for sampling adult offenders who are not in a confined environment. The participants were studied in their actual world, and the researcher facilitated the



interviews and engaged with them at venues of their choice, in order to develop a better understanding of their experiences that had led them to re-offend.

#### 3. 4.4 Descriptive research design

A descriptive research is a type of research design which is conducted for the purpose of gaining a better understanding of a topic with the aim of describing the views and their characteristics (Szilvia, 2013:28). Social science qualitative research is mostly conducted for the purpose of describing events and situations (Babbie, 2013:91). Kumar (2011:30) had noted that descriptive study helps to systematically describe a problem, phenomena, situation or service with the view of providing information of that is prevalent. The researcher, therefore was able to give a broader descriptive of the factors that contribute to recidivism in male adult offender, as obtained from interviews and observation of participants.

A process-product relationship in explorative and descriptive research design existed in this study. The researcher explored the contributory factors of recidivism through probing, guided by semi-structured open-ended interview guide and then described the data by looking into the characteristics of the participants. A detailed description of the factors that contribute to recidivism of adult male offenders is provided in chapter four of this research report.

### 3.5 RESEARCH METHOD

Research method refers to a scientific technique or approach of gathering data with a specific purpose and usefulness (Hatman, 2019:2). Creswell (2014:16) explained that research method entails the procedures for data collection, analysis and interpretation which the researcher intends to use for the study. Jonker and Pennink (2010:17) elucidate that a research methodology is the approach with which the researcher chooses to conduct a research, including how sampling, data collection, data analysis and interpretation will be done.

The following section will outline the research methods employed for the study, which include research population, sampling, and method of data collection, piloting, data analysis, data verification and ethical considerations.

### **3.5.1 Population**

Population is defined as the entire mass from which the sample is to be drawn from (Pandey and Pandey 2015:40). For Thomas (2017:141), the population refers to the persons who retain specific attributes that qualify them for inclusion in the study. The same was resonated by Babbie (2013:115) who indicate that population is the group of people whom the study is focused upon and it helps the researcher to select a sample from whom the data can be drawn, since it is almost impossible to study the entire population.

This study focused on a homogeneous population. Homogeneous refers to a population where members' shares similar attribute (Walliman, 2011:95). The population for this study were adult male released offenders who have a record of more than one criminal convictions of which the last discharged sentence is not older than five years. The rational for focusing on this population is informed by findings of conducted studies, such as (Alper, Durose and Markman, 2018:1, Karimi, 2018 and Clear 2010:2) that revealed that most offenders re-offended during their first five years of release.

The preliminary observation undertaken by the researcher in the Community Corrections Service Centers in Vhembe District Municipality indicated that there are quite a number of male adult offenders who had reoffended during their first five years of release. This finding is also supported by the researcher's observations during pre-sentence reports' investigations. The focus area for this study was Vhembe District Municipality. The choice of study area was motivated by its proximity to the researcher and also the language spoken in the area is the same for the researcher; this was an advantage to the researcher as the services of interpreter were not needed.

### **3.5.2 Sampling**

Sampling refers to the selection of a subset of individuals from within a targeted population to represent the entire population (Igwenagu, 2016:32, Wilson & Maclean 2011:317), hence, it is a means of selecting a given number of subjects from a defined population (Pandey & Pandey 2015:40). According to Sizilvia (2013:31) sampling is the process of learning about the population from a sample which is a subgroup of a population taken from a larger population to whom inference can be made. It is also referred to a representative “taste” of a group (Nayak & Singh, 2015:78). It was further explained that correct sampling methods help a researcher to conduct research more efficiently, have greater flexibility, and provides for greater accuracy (Nayak & Singh, 2015:78). De Vos and Sarantakos in De Vos, Strydom, Fouche’ and Delport (2011:390) maintain that sampling is flexibly applied, less structured and less quantitative in a qualitative study.

Bryman (2012:425) asserts that it is impossible to know the exact size of the sample to be interviewed before saturation has been achieved. The same sentiment was echoed by Creswell (2014:189) who contended that sample sizes should not be too small to make it difficult to achieve data saturation, or too large to cause informational redundancy. A sample should, therefore, not be too large to make it difficult to undertake a deep case-oriented analysis.

The researcher initiated this process by identifying the participants (adult male offenders with a record of re-offending over a period not older than five years) as guided by purposive and snowball sampling methods. The researcher did not determine the sample size at the onset because he subscribed to the principle of data saturation. The researcher carefully and attentively listened until he was hearing repeats of the same information from the participants. The researcher, thus, determined the adequate sample size after discovering that there was no more new information from the participants (Creswell, 2016:110). Charmaz in Creswell (2014:189) supports the idea of data saturation and indicate that the researcher should

cease to collect data when there is no new information coming. A total sample of 14 adult male offenders who met the inclusion criteria were sampled in this study. The researcher discusses the sample and sampling methods utilised in this study beneath.

### **3.5.2.1. Sampling methods**

The researcher employed non-probability sampling method in this study. Non-probability sampling method is used in cases where the researcher does not know the population size and being unable to identify the elements of the population individually (Kumar 2011:187). The strategy is further described as a form of sampling where the researcher does not know if every person in the population has equal chance of being selected (Dudley, 2011:140). This approach offers a researcher the potential to access population which is difficult or sensitive and does not require a list of all the subjects in the total population (Du Plooy-Cilliers et al. 2017:137).

In this study, the researcher used non- probability sampling, particularly purposive and snowball sampling. Participants in this study did not enjoy the same chance to be selected since the population size was unknown to the researcher.

#### **a. Purposive Sampling**

This is the sampling method where the researcher uses available knowledge to select the sample in relation to criterion which are considered relevant for the study (Pandey & Pandey, 2015:54). It is, thus, referred to a form of sampling where the researcher purposefully select samples based on their characteristics (Du Plooy-Cilliers et al. 2017:142). Babbie (2013:128) notes it as a form of sampling where the researcher selects the sample based on the knowledge of a population, its elements and the aim of the study.

Purposive sampling was used to sample two participants who partook in the pilot testing of the study. In this study, the researcher used his judgement to identify the characteristics of the participant who would meet the inclusion criterion of the study. The researcher is a practicing PO who compiles pre-sentence report for convicted offenders who are later placed on different treatment options guided by his

recommendation. The researcher also facilitates the behaviour modification programmes for probationers sentenced in terms of section 276(1) (h) and 297(1) (b) of Criminal Procedure Act 51 of 1977. These responsibilities gave the researcher an advantage of knowing the convicts' criminal background without violating their rights for privacy.

Participants who meet the following criteria for inclusion were considered in this study for pilot testing and for the main study:

- Adult males who have more than one criminal conviction regardless of their race.
- The last sentence discharge should have been not older than five years.
- Participants who were above the age of 21 years. The age was determined by the possibility that between the ages of 18 and 21 the participant might have been convicted more than once.
- Residing in Vhembe District Municipality during the time of the study to ensure proximity to the researcher.
- Participants who were available and willing to participate in the study.
- Participants who were able to communicate in Tshivenda and English. Tshivenda is the dominant spoken language of Vhembe district municipality and very few people are unable to speak it. The English language will be used with those who are unable to speak Tshivenda. The researcher who is the key data collection agent can speak these two languages. Furthermore, using these two languages was cost effective as the researcher did not have the budget for language interpreters.

The following exclusion criteria were considered in this study:

- Offenders who were under the programme offered by the PO who is the researcher (to avoid undue influence).
- Adult male offenders who were mentally challenged at the time of the study.
- Offenders who had been hospitalised during the time of the study.

The researcher used his judgment to purposively select the first two participants who were used in the pilot testing. These participants were sampled from the population of the probationers who were under the supervision of the PO and from the population of the referred convicts for the purpose of pre-sentencing report. Identified participants who meet the inclusion criterion were informed about the purpose of the study and requested to voluntarily participate in the pilot-testing of the study. The researcher read the informed consent letter to individual participants and explained the purpose of the pilot testing. Participants who voluntarily agreed for pilot testing were used as a snowball to refer the researcher to other suitable participants who meet the criteria of the study.

#### **b. Snowball sampling**

Snowball sampling uses recommendations from identified participants to increase the sample size. The initial participant provide suggestions of other people who fit the attributes for inclusion and they are willing to participate in the study (Du Plooy-Cilliers et al. 2017:143). It is further explained that snowball sampling is a form of sampling where the researcher requests the available few participants to help with information to locate other targets who would meet the inclusion criteria (Babbie, 2013:129). Bryman (2012:424) echoes that it is in a snowball sampling where the researcher meets a small group of participants and asks them to assist in locating other similar-characterised participants who are relevant to the research study. Du Plooy-Cilliers et al. (2017:144) further indicate that the snowball method is often used in instances where participants are difficult to locate due to the unavailability of data or records. This was one of the suitable sampling methods in this study because the participants

for this study were not easily located. The researcher relied on the participants from the pilot study to give him the names of other people who meet the inclusion criterion.

The researcher elected to use this form of snowball sampling to broaden his participants' base. Two participants were purposively sampled from the Probationers placed in terms of Section 297 (1)(b) and 276 (1)(h) of the Criminal Procedure Act 51 of 1977 and from the clients identified during the pre-sentence investigation. In sampling them, the researcher requested the referee to liaise with them first for the purpose of asking permission to give their contact to the researcher. This was done to promote informed consent and voluntary participation in the study.

The researcher opted not to use the DCS as a gate-keeper because his research participants were released offenders and it was further established that the Department does not subject its clients to the disclaimer of information sharing. The researcher was mindful that releasing or divulging of confidential information without the owner's consent is unlawful in terms of The Promotion of Personal Information Act (PAIA) No 2 of 2000 and the researcher was ethically bound to observe this statute.

### **3.6 DATA COLLECTION**

#### **3.6.1 Preparation for data collection**

Creswell (2014:189) explains that data collection involves preparation for the following activities: preparing place for the interview, setting the boundary for the study, deciding how data will be gathered be it through structured, unstructured, semi structured interview or observation, documents or visual materials. This process includes a decision of how information will be recorded. Creswell (2014:194) goes further to indicate that the researcher must develop an interview protocol that guide standard procedure for all the interviews. Interview protocol entails the following: heading (date, place, interviewer and interviewee), instruction to guide standardization of the process, ice breaker question at the beginning of the interview and a thank-you statement to

acknowledge the interviewee for their participation in the study. It is important for the researcher to internalize the goal of the study and its objectives in order to prevent poor interviewing skills and poor phrasing of questions (De Vos, Strydom, Fouche' & Delpont, 2014: 343).

Data collection was preceded by physical contact with the participants in order to seek their permission to take part in the study. Participants were contacted telephonically after receiving the information from the initial informants (snowballing technique). The researcher took time to introduce himself to the participants and outline how he got hold of them. This was a brief explanation for the purpose of making an appointment.

After individual participants expressed their willingness to participate in this study, the researcher informed them about the process of data collection that was to be followed in the study. Participants were informed in advance that interview will last for an hour guided by the volume of the information. The researcher established rapport with the participants to enable effective data gathering and to cope with any unanticipated problem (De Vos, Strydom, Fouche' & Delpont, 2014: 343). The researcher tested the recording equipment before the start of the interview (Bell and Waters, 2014:180).

The researcher articulated clearly the questions, demonstrated good interview skills and built rapport with participants; that made it easy for them to comprehend the questions and respond accordingly. The researcher, therefore, acknowledged that participants are the relevant people who are knowledgeable about the subject matter of the study as guided by the inclusion criteria discussed under purposive sampling (Kumar, 2011:150).

### **3.6.2 Methods of data collection**

An in-depth face-to-face semi- structured interview was employed to gather data about the contributory factors of recidivism from sampled adult male offenders. This method was guided by open-ended question interview guide (Greeff, 2011:352). Semi-structured interview is a form of data collection where participants are stimulated by the researcher to engage in an open-ended discussion (Majid, 2018:3) and refers to a



conversation with a purpose, which affords the researcher and the participants more flexibility (De Vos, Strydom, Fouche' & Delport, 2014: 351). The same sentiment is offered by Du Plooy-Cilliers et al (2017:188) who indicate that same-structured interview gives the researcher an opportunity to pose questions to the participants and make follow up with the intention of learning more about research topic. This method enabled the researcher to obtain comprehensive information elicited from adult male offenders through follow up questions to give more information about the factors that contribute to recidivism.

The researcher developed an interview guide as data collection tool and the order of questions were flexible depending on the responses given by the participants (Bryman, 2012:212). Handwritten notes and audiotaping were used to gather rich and complex information after obtaining the participants' permission; the handwritten data served as backup material (Creswell, 2014:194). Recorded interviews assisted the researcher to check the wording of quoted statement (Bell & Waters, 2014:184).

The researcher considered the following biographical information which aided in developing the demographic profile of the participants:

- Age
- Ethnicity
- Marital status
- Highest academic achievement
- Employment status
- List of criminal offences committed
- Types of administered sentences
- Date of last discharge

The following developed interview questions enabled the researcher to elucidate data that help in the realization of the study goal:

- Please tell me - How did you get more than one criminal conviction?
- What do you think are the contributory factors of re-offending?
- What do you think contributed to your re-offending?
- How did the community members perceive you during your previous criminal discharge?
- What kind of support did you receive, prior and during the period after your previous criminal discharge?
- Please describe the role of your family in your criminal re-offending behaviour.
- What were the difficulties or challenges that you encounter during your previous discharge from prison?
- How would you describe the role of economic aspects on criminal re-offending behaviour?
- What do you think various professionals can do to prevent criminal re-offending behaviour?
- What are the various rehabilitation programme that you have attended before your last conviction?

The interview guide was translated from English to Tshivenda in order to cover research participants who had difficulties in understanding English. Interviews were conducted at the venue and time suitable to the participants, therefore, the researcher uphold Carpenter, (2007:21) and Creswell,( 2013:129) suggestions as the interviews were conducted in a comfortable venue for the participants in order to avoid detractions to the flow of the interview processes. Confidentiality was observed by conducting an interview in a private space chosen by the study participant. The researcher was guided by the developed interview protocols which had courtesy statements to acknowledge the participants for their time spent in participation in the study.

### **3.7. PILOT TESTING**

Pilot testing allows researchers to do a trial run before the commencement of the real study to perfect the methods of data collection and refine the data collection instruments (Grove, Burns & Gray, 2013:703). Beebe and Lancaster in Kim (2010:191) suggest that pilot testing affords the researcher an opportunity to evaluate readiness for the research undertaking and to check his keenness and ability to assume a qualitative research endeavour. Pilot testing enables researchers to assess their interview skills (Greeff, 2011:300). For the purpose of this study, the researcher conducted a pilot study with two participants (adult male offenders) discharged from Thohoyandou Probation Officer's office, who met the inclusion criteria and were purposively sampled from the Probationers who were in the behaviour modification programme and convicts referred for the purpose of pre-sentence report. This allowed the researcher to test the feasibility of the interview protocol and data collection method, as articulated in the study.

The pilot test outcome did not necessitate any major changes. It emerged from the pilot test that some of the questions were not in a good sequence. The following alterations were made after a consultation and agreement with the supervisor. Question (h) in the research instrument alternated with question (i). This was done to allow proper flow of the participants' responses and to observe the logic after it was observed that these questions were not in good sequence. The pilot test assisted the researcher to refine his interview skills, evaluate his readiness and ability to conduct an effective and efficient qualitative study. It also enabled the researcher to observe good time management, while at the same time applying good interview, and probing skills. Data collected from the two participants who partake in the pilot test were not considered in this study.

### **3.8. METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS**

Data analysis as defined in Pandey and Pandey (2015:70) is the crunching of the collected data in order to establish and ascertain essential evidence. The same sentiment is echoed by Brayman (2012:13) who refers to analysis as a process of reducing the large amount of collected data to establish essential evidence. Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, (2017:232) reiterate that data analysis is the process of decreasing the volume of raw data, scrutinizing significance from trivia, identifying significant patterns and developing a framework for communicating the essence of what the data reveals. Data analysis enabled the researcher to make sense of the data collected.

The researcher employed thematic analysis to examine the collected data. Thematic analysis is a method of data analysis which is used for identifying, analysing, and reporting themes for the collected dataset in relation to a research question (Braun & Clarke, 2013:175). Maguire and Delahunt (2017:3353) take it further to indicate that the goal of thematic analysis is to identify patterns in the data that are important or interesting. Braun and Clarke (2006:16) provide a six-stage guide which is a very useful framework for conducting data analysis. The phases are as follows:

#### **Phase 1: Become familiar with the data**

This is the first step in qualitative data analysis which involves reading the data. A researcher carefully listens and re-listens to the audio-recorded data from the narratives of the participants. The researcher transcribes the verbatim audio recorded interviews in order to conduct a thematic analysis. It is crucial for the researcher to have a good understanding of the dataset. The researcher read through the transcribed data set more than once in order to familiarise himself with it, this enabled him to have a better understanding. Ideas and early impressions that emerge from reading the transcriptions were noted.

## **Phase 2: Generate initial codes**

This phase involves organising data in a meaningful and systematic ways. The researcher began by putting codes to every interesting data that was relevant to the topic of the study. These were data segments relevant to address the factors that contribute to criminal recidivism of adult male offenders. This was a flexible process that allowed the emerging of new codes and modification of the existing ones. Coding was done electronically by highlighting sections of phrases or sentences relevant to the study topic.

## **Phase 3: Search for themes**

This phase begin when all data is coded and collated. The researcher sorted different codes into potential themes and subthemes collated from all the relevant coded data. The researcher then compiled a list of all sub-themes identified after all transcripts had been read. Common sub-themes were grouped together to produce a major theme then classified into columns marked as, themes, sub-themes and category.

## **Phase 4: Review themes**

The researcher reviewed, modified and developed the preliminary themes that were identified in phase three to check whether they make sense. Relevant data was aligned to relevant theme and this was done through a highlighter. The researcher then carefully considered the congruency of data with a given theme, checked if there were themes within a theme (sub-themes) and also checked if there were themes within the data. The data associated with each theme were colour-coded.

## **Phase 5: Define themes**

In this stage, the researcher conduct the final refinement of the themes. It is in this phase where the researcher tried to find the most descriptive wording for the themes and allocate them into categories. The researcher endeavoured to understand the essence of what every theme was saying and also strived to understand the relevance of the sub-themes. The researcher then lessen the list of categories by grouping

together themes that share relationships. For every individual theme, the researcher has conducted and written a detailed analysis, as well as identifying the “story” that each theme tells; important consideration was given to how each theme and its story fits into the research question; the researcher then ensured that there were no overlaps between the themes. The researcher was able to clearly define the meaning of every theme at the end of this stage.

### **Phase 6: Writing-up**

In this final stage, the researcher has considered a set of fully worked-out themes and involved final analysis for the purpose of compiling the report. To ensure that the compiled report meet the merit of data verification, the report has included data extracts and provided a concise, coherent, logical, non-repetitive and interesting account of the story.

### **3.9. METHODS OF DATA VERIFICATION**

Data verification relates to the assessment of the credibility of the research findings (Pool, 2017:282). According to Creswell (2014:201) data validation is not a stand-alone process in research as it happens throughout the stages of research. Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, (2017:254) contend that qualitative research verification is guided by the concept “trustworthiness,” which is qualified by reliability and validity. This is because qualitative studies focus on gathering in-depth understanding which cannot be quantified by numbers. These two elements are elaborated by Creswell (2014:201) as follows: reliability assesses whether the study can produce the same findings if conducted by a different researcher at a different time using the same instrument; while validity has to do with assessing the accuracy of the findings through the use of a specific procedure. Neuman (2014:218) echoes that reliability refers to dependability and consistency of the study, while validity refers to the truthfulness of the same. This means that a research study has to offer a fair, honest, and balanced account of social life from the data collected and systematically analysed.

Data verification in this study was employed through the use of the four elements of trustworthiness as outlined by Lincoln & Guba in (Bryman, 2012:392).

### **3.9.1 Credibility**

This concept considers the correctness of interpreted data provided by the participants; credibility is upheld when the findings are accepted by the participants. Credibility answers how the findings concur and conform to reality and it refers to the “respondent validation” of the data (Bryman, 2012:390). The researcher used member checking strategy and relevant peer review (POs working with male adult offenders) to certify the credibility of the findings. Peer review were considered based on their field experience. Ideally, Shenton (2004:68) submits that member checking is the best strategy to ratify credibility. The aim of this process is to seek corroboration of the researcher’s findings (Bryman, 2012:391). To achieve this, the researcher discussed the analysed data with the supervisor and checked whether the emerging information and conclusions are correct representations of the narratives. Contradictory information were highlighted as another way of promoting credibility so as to increase the judicious nature of the results. The researcher then identified opposing views and perceptions when discussing emerging themes with the participants and peers in order to examine and account for the diverse submissions on the phenomenon investigated and to ensure that all evidence is appropriately afforded space and representation.

### **3.9.2 Transferability**

This entails assessing the steadiness of the findings in relation to theory and future research (Lincoln & Guba in Lietz & Zayas, 2010:195). A sustained qualitative study has to produce thick descriptions which will provide a data base for future reference (Lincoln & Guba in Bryman, 2012:392). Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, (2017:258) refers to transferability as the degree to which testing the findings confirms their ability to produce the same results when tested in a similar situation. Furthermore, qualitative findings should afford generalisation and give a degree of application beyond a specific research project. Relevance of the identified sampling method (purposive and

snowball sampling) have guaranteed the representation of the population which meet the inclusion criterion. This helped to present thick in-depth findings which are transferable.

The researcher employed validation strategies as outlined in Creswell (2014:201) to ensure transferability, which are as follows:

- Use member checking to strengthen the findings. This was achieved by taking the final report to the available participants and peers to determine the accuracy of the findings. The researcher used summarization skill and thereafter afforded the participants time to give their comment. All participants unanimously agreed with the findings.
- Researcher also used observation in the field in order to develop more in-depth understanding of the adult male offenders' contributory factors to recidivism.
- Finally, the researcher further used peer review to enhance the correctness of the findings. This was done by consulting fellow POs who are working with male adult offenders and all ten consulted POs consistently agreed with the findings.

### **3.9.3 Dependability**

Qualitative research should produce an audit trail by ensuring that all complete records are kept of all phases of the research process (Lincoln & Guba in Bryman, 2012: 392).

Dependability refers to the recollection or conservation of data collection method, data analysis and the theory generated from the data (Lincoln & Guba, Shenton, Collis & Hussey in Du Ploy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2017:259). Ravitch and Carl (2016:189) maintain that dependability refers to the reliability and stability of data over time. For dependability, the researcher accounts for the changes that include the picture created by an increasingly refined understanding of the setting (De Vos *et al.*, 2014:420). The researcher maintained flexibility for the likely fluctuating conditions of the design, process and setting of the research process. The researcher was also flexible to change of time and location of the participants, from the initial charges to incarceration



and re-offending in order to identify patterns in the narratives of the participants. Twelve of the interviewed research participants were still on parole while two completed their sentences in 2019 and 2020. These differences enabled the researcher to observe the likely time and triggers for re-offending from the diversity of the participants. Furthermore, the researcher did not shy away from all the integration of research processes, especially the daunting task of interviewing re-offenders who have developed negative attitudes towards the reform protocols that are embedded in the correctional centres' settings.

#### **3.9.4 Conformability**

Conformability answers the question of objectivity. A researcher is compelled to ask whether the findings of a study could be confirmed by another researcher. This process takes away the researcher's role of evaluation and places it on the data to speak for itself (Lincoln & Guba as cited in De Vos *et al.*, 2011:419). The literature review was conducted before commencing with data collection to ensure the study is bounded and informed by recent and relevant literature. Furthermore, the literature was consulted to endorse or contest the findings of the study after data analysis to eliminate any innate flawed characteristic.

### **3.10. SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER**

This chapter presented a detailed research methodology which encompasses research approach, research design, population and sampling. The chapter further presented data collection which included preparation for data collection and method of data collection. The chapter additionally outlined the utilized pilot testing, method of data analysis and data verification.

## **Chapter 4:**

### **PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF THE RESEARCH FINDINGS**

#### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

The focus of this chapter is on the presentation and discussion of the research findings gathered from the process of data collection and analysis with the participants. This chapter provides the demographic data of the research participants and an overview of the themes and sub-themes. The reviewed literature was used as reference to compare and contrast the findings to other studies.

The goal of this study, as established in the beginning of the study was to develop an in-depth understanding of the factors contributing to recidivism among adult male offenders, in order to provide a foundation for rehabilitation and reintegration service providers, who may use this study to provide more informed reintegration and rehabilitation services to offenders with the view of reducing the high rate of recidivism. For the realization of this goal, semi-structured interviews were conducted with fourteen participants who met the inclusive criteria.

#### **4.2 BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION OF THE RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS**

It is vital to describe the demographic particulars of the participant in order to give clarity to the collected data. This is so because their background and personal experience might have an impact on how the participants respond to the research questions. The presented inclusion criteria in chapter three was used to sample fourteen male adult participants who partook in the study. For the purposes of ensuring confidentiality and anonymity, alpha-numerical codes were allocated to participants to

hide their actual names. The demographic particulars of the people who participated in this study are presented in the Table below.

**Table 4.1: Biographic information of the participants**

Code	Age	MS	EG	HQ	ES	CO	SA	YOLD
P1	40	Unmarried	Venda	Grade 10	Unemployed	Robbery, Rape and Escape	3x DI= 3,8, 10yrs	Still on parole
P2	35	Unmarried	Venda	Grade 9	Unemployed	AGBHx2, theftx2 Robberyx2 IA	CD CCS=6m AG 4xDI=3,4,7yrs	Still on parole
P3	56	Married	Venda	Grade 10	Unemployed	Assault MITP Rape	3xDI = 3,4 m, 18yrs	Still on parole
P4	68	Married	Venda	STD 4	Unemployed	ARx3	DIx3 = 48 yrs.	Still on parole
P5	22	Unmarried	Venda	Grade 10	Unemployed	Theft x2	CD CCS=8m	Still on parole
P6	48	Married	Venda	Grade 12	Unemployed	Theft x7	CCS= 12m DI x6=38yrs	Still on Parole
P7	48	Married	Venda	Grade 12	Casual	Assault x2	CD	Still on parole

						Murder	AG=R50 DI= 15yrs	
P8	27	Married	Venda	Grade 8	Casual	Rape Dealing with drugs	DI=10, 6 m	Still on parole
P9	41	Unmarried	Venda	Grade 12	Unemployed	DWDL, AGBH, AR x2	Fine=R300,R1000 DI=15 yrs.	Still on parole
P10	37	Married	Venda	Grade 10	Self-employed	Car theft, AR	DI=2m, 15 yrs.	Still on parole
P11	34	Married	Venda	Grade 9	Unemployed	Theft, HB, Assault, Rape	CCS=6m, DI= 1m,6m,10yrs	Still on parole
P12	36	Married	Venda	Grade 9	Self-employed	Assault, AGBH, ASGBH	CCS=6m, Fine = R500 DI=1yr	2019
P13	37	Married	Venda	Grade 12	Self-employed	Assault, AGBH,AGBH	Suspended sentence, DI=6m,12m	Still on parole
P14	33	Married	Venda	Grade 9	Employed	Assault, AGBH	Fine=R50, CCS=2m	2020

KEY	MEANING
DI	Direct imprisonment
AGBH	Assault with intension to cause grievously bodily harm
CD	Caution and discharge
MS	Marital status
EG	Ethnic group
HQ	Highest qualification
ES	Employment status
CO	Criminal offences
SA	Sentences administered
YOLD	Year of last discharge
P	Participants
CCS	Community Correctional Supervision
AG	Admission of Guilty
HB	House Breaking

YRS	Years
IA	Indecent assault
AR	Arm Robbery
MITP	Malicious Injury to Property
DWDL	Driving without driver's license

It was established that criminal history and age of the offender have a strong influence on recidivism behaviour (Hunt & Easley, 2017:3). Participants in this study were male adults of the age range - 22 to 68 years. The majority of these participants, seven in number, were within the ages of 30 to 39, followed by four from the ages of 40 to 49 years. Each of the remaining participants is between the age of 21 to 29 years, 51 to 59 years and 60 to 69 years. All participants were from the same Venda ethnic group. Six had three criminal convictions, three had two criminal convictions, two had seven criminal convictions, as well as another two with four criminal convictions. One participant was unable to recall his exact criminal convictions but was convinced that he had more than four criminal convictions. Most of the committed offences (23 cases) involved properties (property offences) committed in a form of theft, house breaking, robbery, and malicious damage to properties. Four of the cases were sexual offences in a form of rape and indecent assault, while 13 were assault cases in a form of murder, assault GBH and assault common. Eight of these participants were unemployed during the time of the commission of their re-offending cases, while three were self-employed. Two of the participants were casual workers while only one participant was employed during the time of re-offending. Almost all participants had started by committing less serious criminal offences, hence, were given less sentences that were predominantly punitive with no rehabilitation program attached to it. Virtually all the first-given sentences were non-custodial in the form of Community Correctional Services, suspended sentence and a low fine. These kinds of sentences denied them the opportunity of being subjected to a rehabilitation program at an early stage. It was asserted that academic level is a risk factor of recidivism behaviour Cronje (2017:68). None of the participants had a tertiary qualification during the time of their reoffending and their highest qualification was Grade twelve while the majority had Grade ten and below. Twelve of these participants were on parole during the data collection period and only two had completed their sentences in the years 2019 and 2020.



### 4.3 DISCUSSION OF THE THEMES, SUB-THEMES AND CATEGORIES

This section presents the different themes, sub-themes, and categories as they were developed from the analysis of the data collected from the narratives of the male adult offenders. The identified themes and subthemes present factors that contribute to recidivism among adult male offenders. Table 4.2 gives an outline of the themes, sub-themes and their category.

Table 4.2: Theme, Sub-themes and Categories

THEMES	SUBTHEMES	CATEGORY
1.Social-demographic factors	1.1. Familial factors	Lack of family support
	1.2. Low academic achievement	Illiteracy
	1.3. Deviant friends	Peer influence
	1.4. Family background	Domestic violence Upbringing Child raised in the CYCC
	1.5. Social network	Gangsterism
	1.6. Lack of self-acceptance	Overambitious
2. Alcohol and substance abuse	2.1. Need to get alcohol and drug	
	2.2. Intoxication	Loss of control
3. Availability of weapon		Attitude of bravado

4. Socio-economic factors	4.1. Criminal record	Job opportunity
	4.2. Lack of starter pack	Self-reliance
	4.3. Illegal businesses	Illicit dealing in prison
	4.4. Prison environment	Corrupt officials Mixing of inmates
	4.5. Retributive sentence 4.6. Unemployment	
5. Stigma and name-calling (notorious alias)		Community rejection Branded certificates Deviant behaviour

Generally, there are different factors that are contributory to recidivism in adult male offenders. The coming sections present five themes, fourteen sub-themes and eighteen categories as listed above in Table 4.2; these are supported by verbatim quotations from the interview transcriptions. The reviewed literature is used in support when presenting these findings.

#### **4.3.1 Theme 1: Social-demographic factors**

Social-demographic factors involve a combination of social and demographic factors which contribute to recidivism among male adult offenders. Demographics relate to the characteristics used to classify a person. For the purpose of this study, social-demographic factors refer to the social attributes that are used to classify or define a person, such as family relationship, academic achievement, friends, familial factors, social networks, and issues of self-acceptance. Evidence gathered during the data collection revealed that there are quite a number of social-demographic

factors that contribute to re-offending. The following are the subthemes that emerged during the process of data analysis.

#### **4.3.1.1 Sub-theme 1.1: Family relationship**

This refers to the relationship between family members that influences family affection and support. Family is a system whereby members share reciprocal relationship. Inmates as members of a family also expect family members to visit them during their incarceration period because their presence helps to strengthen the rehabilitation processes. Lack of family support during incarceration derails the rehabilitation process and as such contribute to re-offending behavior, both inside and outside the prison. Furthermore, lack of family support during incarceration period makes one to be self-centered and think that family members have disowned him. This consequently makes it easy for one to re-offend because he thinks that his life only matters for himself and not any other person or family members. Participants revealed that getting visits during the incarceration period in prison is crucial because they promote the rehabilitation process. This makes one not to be self-centered but also to think about other people who care for him. Family relationship affects the manner in which the inmates take their decisions and to take consideration of any intended consequences to himself and the people who surround him. Having family visits in prison helps to sustain the family bond and serves as a reminder to the inmates that there are people who care and have concern for him outside. Participants revealed the following:

*“Yes, lack of visitors in jail delay your rehabilitation because it made you to blame your family members for not visiting you. You loss respect and careless about them and yourself. This makes it easier for you to relapse on criminal activities whereby you can even fight with your brother while outside. You can even fight physically or verbally with him”. (P7)*

*“Yes you can continue with it because you still have that anger. This became my way of life. I remember reoffending the first day of my release before I could even reach home. People*

*at home were just surprised by seeing police van at home because they were not aware of my release. I got arrested before I could reach home". (P2)*

*"Eish jaah, you have asked a very challenging question. I was only visited once while at Kutama prison by my mother. This was after I have requested the Social Worker to request her to visit me as I understand that she is the one closer to me since I was staying with her. I told the Social Worker that I have a mother but she is not visiting me. My father only came once, he was a police officer but he is no more. It was difficult for her to visit me while at Matatshe Thohoyandou Correctional Centre, it was the same situation even when I was at Kutama Sinthumule maximum prison. I was only visited twice for all my criminal convictions. OH yes it contribute a lot. Lack of visitors makes me to believe that there is no one caring for me and this connotation makes it easy for me to recommit crime because I didn't think of another person. This makes me to be self-reliance". (P10)*

Findings of the study revealed that offenders who do not have family support during incarceration are more vulnerable to criminal activities in prison. These are the inmates who likely become the primary targets for illicit drug dealing in prison where they are decoyed by the kingpin who sees their vulnerability, as a result of lack of family visit. These are the kind of people who find it easy to constantly go back to jail because they know that they have a business to run in jail. Interviewed participants have this to say:

*"They spot people who have been neglected there, in particular those without visits and they propose you to sell these substances. When things go wrong they arrest the one who is selling and the business owner remains innocent. The seller is convicted again in court". (P4)*

*"What encourage me to decide on selling drug or to act unlawfully was that I spent about three months without having visitors while in jail. This was after the death of my brother. I was not having money the way I used to have since my family members were not visiting*

*me. I began to think about the means of generating money and I decided to sell dagga. Dagga is the thing which makes lot of money in prison because most of the inmates smoke in prison. I took that decision because I found myself suffering there and I knew that Dagga is being smuggled inside". (P8)*

Family intimacy or relationship is an integral factor in the behaviour modification of the offenders. Inadequate family support hinders the offender's successful rehabilitation forcing him to relapse into criminal activities. Abadi and Tegeng (2018:1) concur that lack of emotional attachment, lack of love and affection from family members are the risk factors that contribute to re-offending behaviour. These scholars articulate that recidivism is associated with the amount of contact inmates receive from their family members while in prison; lack of family involvement is strongly related to a high rate of recidivism. Similarly, Yorgancioglu (2018:13) contends that strain family relationships contribute to re-offending behaviour; a strained relationship may be articulated by poor interpersonal relationship where family member are not available for each other; this may eventually manifest itself in the form of lack of visits to the inmates. Lack of visit to the inmates impact negatively on their rehabilitation processes and increase the prospects of them re-offending. On the contrary, successful rehabilitation and behaviour modification is stimulated by support and consideration from the significant others, since a family is a system. Offenders with inadequate family support or no family attachment are more likely to reoffend.

#### **4.3.1.2 Sub theme 1.2: Low academic achievement**

Low academic achievement or illiteracy is one of the contributory factor of reoffending as revealed by the participants. People with no tertiary qualification have a low chance of being employed and if they are lucky to be employed, they often find a job which pay them low salaries. These people struggle to meet their needs and that of their families since they are unemployed. Illiterate people often rush their decisions and pay less consideration to the consequences of their decisions, as such they end up re-offending. Coincidentally, all the participants (re-offenders) that were interviewed in this study were found to have no tertiary qualification. It was revealed that illiterate

people find it difficult to get a job which can help them to meet their basic needs and that of their families. Such people resort to committing crime, in particular, property crimes with the view of fundraising through selling the stolen items or utilizing the stolen items themselves. This becomes their habits even after being discharged from the previous sentence; they see themselves as having no other alternatives for generating money. The following participant's story line elucidates the point

*"Well, it becomes difficult to an illiterate person to find a job as such that person end up suffering. This suffering gives birth to evil plan of recommitting crime. This also contributed to a situation where a released offender found himself just seated at home unemployed. Consequently this person committed another crime". (P6)*

*"This led me to leave school at an early stage and begin to have friendship with infamous people who initiated me to criminal life". (P10)*

*"A person who re-offended is the one who did not go to school and failed to take an opportunity to learn various programs while in prison". (P2)*

Demographic information of the participants who have re-offended in this study revealed that none of the participants had a tertiary qualification, only four participants have passed Grade twelve during their re-offending time. Their average qualifications during time of recidivating was Grade eight. This issue with the academic qualification is similar to the point made by Cronje (2017:68) who assert that offender with low levels of academic qualification are at risk of displaying re-offending behaviour. In his sample of 73 South African recidivists, Cronje (2012:94) revealed that the highest number of participants (23.3%) had only completed up to Grades five, six or seven followed by Grade eight or nine at 21.9% and 11% had completed Grade 12. The narratives of the participants in this study corroborated Onyango *et al.*, (2018, 211) who indicated that education level is among the contributory factors of recidivism. The study discovered that people with low levels of education recidivate much more than the well-educated. They went further to indicate that

the majority of people with low levels of education reoffended probably because of the fact that they have low chances of getting employed as compared to the well-educated who are more likely to be employed, after discharge from their sentences. Dissel (2012:30) also revealed that released offenders experience difficulty in finding a sustainable employment because of their deficit in vocational and educational training and consequently resort to survive on criminal activities. Furthermore, studies conducted by Nally et al. (2014:18), confirm that low levels of formal educational attainment is an undisputed predictor of recidivism. Additionally, Nally *et al.*, (2014:17), affirm that uneducated or unskilled offenders face great possibility to be unemployed after release from correctional centres due to their criminal record, deficiency in education or job skills and lack of interpersonal skills. They consequently are likely to become recidivistic as they are unable to be financially sufficient for independent living in the community. The findings of this study validate the findings of other scholar who affirm that illiteracy contributes to re-offending behaviour.

#### **4.3.1.3 Sub-theme 1.3: Deviant Friends**

The influence of friends which is usually referred to as “peer pressure” is among the contributory factors of recidivism. The general perception is that peer pressure is for the young and adolescence only, the reality is that peer pressure does not have age limit nor color and it continues to dominate across all ages and racial groups. Peer pressure is good when it is constructive but can be negative and destructive. The collected data revealed that offenders continue to re-offend because of notorious friends’ influence. This happens in situations where one wants to please or challenge his friends and tends to forget his previous rehabilitation treatment; ultimately, this results in deviant peer influences causing re-offending. Participants have these statements to say:

*“As I have mentioned it, friends are the core factor. I remember well the time where I visited one of my friend whom we meet in prison. My friend wanted to demonstrate to me how he behave in his locality, I also want to show him how I do it in my locality. In that situation there were two people rival each other. We began to act dreadful and started to stab every person we meet on the street. We did this thing from our starting point till to our destiny. We*

*carelessly stab everyone without considering the age and gender, everyone became our prey. We were stabbing innocent people. This was because of the bad friend influence". (P2)*

*"The friends that one's have company with, each of them is having an empty pride. If one says he is going to commit crime at a certain place, peer pressure will makes the other one to follow suit. He is forced to join his friends because of the fear of being disowned by his friends and he ultimately recommit crime for no valid reason but deviant peer pressure. What influenced me to reoffend is peer pressure and the abuse of drug pills which I have used before I went to rehabilitation". (P10)*

*"I mean from prison because I came across different people having different cases. We influence each other while inside there. Inmates share their criminal experiences about how one has master minded his criminal activities and at the end we develop friendship which is sustained outside. I mean we encourage each other to reoffend. So I got equipped with new criminal activities. This makes me to upgrade the standard of my criminal activities. I used to break shops and committed theft. I then started to commit robberies and rob people on the street after my release. I was then able to make calculated moves to orchestrate a successful robbery. I was able to spot a person having money and commit robbery. I remembered well the day in which I robbed a certain old woman who was selling in the social grants pay point whereby I took her wallet having R12000 inside it". (P2)*

Deviant peer pressure also contributes to reoffending behavior in a situation where one fails to exercise independent decision-making and tends to forget about the gains of rehabilitation treatment programmes that he went through. Such a person ultimately succumbs to his deviant friends' pressure and reoffends. The following participant's story line gives evidence of this:

*"I have friends who were having properties and I asked them where they got their properties. They told me that they got their properties out of thefts. So I ended up joining them. Yes*



*there were friends who influenced me to reoffend. This led me to leave school at an early stage and begin to have friendship with infamous people who initiated me to criminal life". (P6)*

*"It was after we have discussed and convince each other that we are facing serious cases, some were facing rape charges while others were facing theft cases. By that time ten years was a heavy sentence. We agreed on a plan to escape from jail. This was prompted by the need of wanting to enjoy our Christmas outside since it was December time". (P1)*

*"This happened as a result of destructive peer influence. It mostly happened when we have no money, we deliberated on a plan to make money. One person will propose an idea of committing house breaking or any other idea. We then buy the idea and go as a team to execute it". (P2)*

The influence of deviant friends also contributes to recidivism in a situation where one is afraid to be disowned by his friend and eventually gives in to the dreadful proposal, forgetting the gains of rehabilitation programmes and being inconsiderate of the consequences of the criminal behaviour. Sometimes a discharged offender is enforced to reoffend because of a friend who threatens to kill or destroy him should he walk away and in fear, the he eventually recidivates. Participants have this to say.

*"In my situation friends have contributed to my reoffending because I was not alone in my cases, I was with my friend. He influenced me to be in this situation. He keeps on telling me most of the time when we were destitute that we need to make plan to get money. He told me that money is galore out there. I asked him how we can make this money and he said that he is having a gun. I told him that I will give it a thought and he told me that I should not take long. I promised him not to take long contemplating it. I later came back to him and contend to his plan. We agreed on the day of the mission. We finally accomplish the mission as planned and got the money, consume it until it is kaput. We said the money is finished,*

*can't we go back again? We agreed to go back and committed another robbery. We came back and consume the money until it is finished. The problem is when the money got finished, we think of going back again. A stolen money go kaput no matter how much it is. You need to make another plan after finishing it". (P9)*

*"This happened when I got a friend who was in bad behaviour of abusing drugs and encourage me to join him. He begin to entice me about the available opportunities to commit crime and went further to impose that we should visit the place this evening to commit crime". (P5)*

A person's deviant peer association greatly influences his decision to recidivate. This is in line with Gantana (2014:45) who attest that a delinquent peer contributes to criminal re-offending behaviour. The scholar elaborates that delinquent peers spent their time on criminal activities during which they commit crimes, such as housebreaking, theft and smoking drugs, such as mandrax and dagga. Oyango *et al.*, (2018:26) concur that peer pressure from delinquent friends contribute to criminal re-offending; ill-behaved peers pull back their friends to recommit crimes despite punishment and even when the latter want to refrain from them. The same sentiment was shared by Walters, (2016:1160) and Otu (2015:139) who maintain that the influence of socially-destructive peer groups is a substantial contributing factor to repeat offending, as recidivists are commonly found to associate more frequently with deviant peers and are easily influenced by them. Many adult male offenders reoffend because of bad accompany and fear of being disowned by their deviant friends; they want to please, not to challenge their deviant friend, because of their failure to exercise independent decision-making.

#### **4.3.1.4 Sub-theme 1.4: Familial factors**

This refers to the family background in which one was raised in. The family background that one comes from shape one's characters or behaviour. This can be reflected in three diverse ways - Domestic violence, Upbringing and Child raised in the CYCC. A family characterized by domestic violence is where parents fight right in front of the children, thereby, developing in them a culture of violence; this makes children to resort to violence when they reach adult-hood stage; such people are recidivists because they have adopted a culture of using violence to resolve conflicts. Participants acknowledge that they view physical contact as the only way of conflict resolution because of what they were subjected to in their families (bullying and domestic violence).

Participants' narratives revealed the following:

*"Apart from poverty, one can grow in a dysfunctional family characterized by domestic violence where a husband assault his wife right in front of their children. Such situation stays in the mind of the child and he begin to normalize it. He grow up having that kind of life in his mind knowing that his mother was a victim of domestic violence and his father came back home late. If he found himself having no money, he begin to emulate his father and continue to commit crime at home. Some other people learned it from home while they were growing up". (P10)*

*This happened in a situation where parents keep on fighting in front of their children. People learned it as children and adopt this kind of life when they are adult. They begin to normalize this kind of behaviour. (P13)*

Findings of the study revealed that the kind of life which young people were subjected to in their families contributes to their criminal re-offending. Some participants disclosed that they were subjected to bullying both in their families and outside. This kind of treatment causes one to develop angry and aggressive behaviour towards other people which was characterized by delinquent violence and tyrant behaviour. Participants mentioned that being subjected to bullying taught them

to bully other people as they tend to normalize this behaviour. They consequently committed and recommitted several cases of assault common, assault GBH and murder.

Participants have these comments to make:

*“Okay, I became a victim of bully and torment at home and outside environment including at school. As a victim I ended up developing this kind of behaviour as defense mechanism and anger. In some instances I thought of revenging and I decided to adopt that kind of behaviour where I also bully or torment other people in a cruel manner. The kind of revenge came as a way of self-protection to the perpetrator who was enjoying to inflict pain on me and it also came as a way of compensating my pain by doing it to other people. This revenge gave birth to a thought of attacking my perpetrator where I nearly took his life, but I was having no intention of killing him. I turn to be a perpetrator where I also bully other people. Yes you can continue with it because you still have that anger. This became my way of life. I remember reoffending the first day of my release before I could even reach home. People at home were just surprised by seeing police van at home because they were not aware of my release. I got arrested before I could reach home”. (P2)*

*“Sometimes it can be as a result of being ill-treated at home. If a person is subjected to ill-treatment by his parents or any one at home, this makes him not to live a good life. This was also one of the thing which led me to live a delinquent criminal life. I was ill-treated at home. I was not taken care off”. (P11)*

*“A situation of a person who was severely assaulted during his upbringing. Such kind of person ended up assaulting other people because he think that is the right way of living. Such person develop a tendency of stabbing other people with knives or chopping them with pangas. Such person deliberately take a panga with the intention of assaulting and*

*chopping other people. I mean I have left my home soberly with a panga knowing my mission very well. This behaviour was enculturated by my upbringing experience". (P2)*

The environment in which one grows in, contributes a lot to the breeding of the character of one. The circumstances that resulted in placing a person in a given environment also contribute in shaping the behavior of that person. Information gathered revealed that children who were raised in the Child and Youth Care Centres (CYCC) are prone to re-offending behavior, simply because they develop anger at the rejection and abandonment by their parents or family members who caused them to be raised at such Centres. These children grow up without having a father or mother figure who would have provide parental care and instilled notions of responsibilities into them. Such children developed blame and anger which they often ventilate when they reach an adult stage; often this happens when they are discharged from the CYCCs. Participants revealed that this anger makes it difficult for them to listen or to abide to any person because they feel rejected and abandoned by their biological parents or family members; they ultimately resort to criminal re-offending behaviour in a quest to vent their anger. Participants had these comments to make:

*"There are children who were raised in the Child and youth care Centre's because they were said to be having no parents. It happened that such kind of child is told after ten years that his parents have been discovered. Immediately after his release from the Centre such person zoom straight to crime because of anger of being abandoned since he did not know his parents and he doubt that even these ones are just said to be his parents for the sake of deceiving him that he should not be delinquent". (P10)*

*"Most of the criminals that I have meet in prison emphasize that they were raised in the Child and Youth Care Centres and they don't know their parents". (P10)*

A family is the immediate institution which grooms the behavior of its members, as observation is one of the best mechanism for learning. A family which makes a living through illicit means like

selling of drug substances enculturate this kind of living into its family members. People who grow up in this kind of family life find it difficult to refrain from criminal behavior even after being subjected to court sentences. One participant revealed that he was convicted several times on the cases of dealing with drugs because it had become his way of living, adopted from his family. The participant said:

*“Let me give you an example, what do you think it is supposed to happen to a child who grown up in a family that makes a living from the selling of Dagga? Yes, that person saw it as a child, some family even taught their children to disregard the law. How could they continue to do illegal things right in front of their children and expect their children not to do so? No it is a clear case that they will follow suit when they grow up. They believe that it is normal because their fathers have been doing that. Yes they think that it is a normal way of making money”. (P13)*

Family is a main factor in the formation or development of an individual. The cycle of abuse, violence, crime and sociopathy keeps on recurring for a person as he was raised from it. The findings of this study support what is recorded by Gantana (2014:42) that aggression behaviour at home is one of the contributory factors of recidivism, since other family members have normalized this kind of behaviour and adopted it as part of their lives. Similarly, Onyango *et al.*, (2018:26) insist that in domestic violent situations where parents fight in front of children contribute to re-offending as family members have normalized violence as a means of conflict resolution. The issue of children who were raised in the CYCC (abandoned and neglected) is focused upon by Yorgancioglu (2018:4) who claim that children who are neglected or abused are more likely to commit and recommit crimes later in life, than others and this neglect and abuse often continue for several generations. The author takes it further to indicate that children who were victims of sexual abuse during childhood often turn to become sexual predators as adults. It was additionally revealed that most inmates who committed murder were subjected to severe abuse during their childhood. The same author, Yorgancioglu (2018:4) continue that, however, children who were

raised by their supportive and loving parents who provided proper parental care and responsibility develop self-confidence and interest in the social environment. Such children sustain good relationship with others and are far less likely to commit crime.

Findings of this study, therefore, confirm that family factors, such as domestic violence, child upbringing and children being raised in the CYCCs contribute to re-offending behaviour. These findings are in agreement with that of the reviewed scholars.

#### **4.3.1.5 Sub-theme 1.5: Social network**

This refers to the kind of social networks which one has in the community; these have influence on criminal re-offending behavior, such as gangsterism. Gangsters have their rules which are strengthened by punitive and retributive measures once deviated or abandoned. Gangsterism is a dominant stand-alone contributory factor of criminal recidivism because of their hard-to-break norms and standards which are ritualistic to its members. Participants revealed that being a member of a gang made them to re-offend several times as a way of conforming to the group, and from fear of victimization which may result in death if they left the gang; gangs have an attitude of bravado since they always want to prove their bravery; this happens both in and outside prison. The following participants' story-line gives a testimony:

*“They introduce you to their criminal activities. You find it difficult to leave them. This is because you have seen their lives and they can’t allow you to just drop them. They threaten to kill you if you left them. They say that you want to expose us. Yes it is very difficult, this can lead to death or any other bad things because you have seen their moves. Most of the criminal don’t live longer, they die young because there is norm which says once you join you don’t quit. If one is unemployed and having no money, you relied on patronage from other people where they can buy you cigarette, alcohol and other things. People get tired to sponsor you and end up proposing you to join them on their criminal activities (gang). It becomes difficult for you to reject them since you have already received help from them.*

*They say, “**tanuda ni theutshela tshipanini**” (come and work with us) you ask them what kind of job is it? They say come you will see it”. (P4)*

*“I mean the spirit of bossy. There are gangs in prison that are identified by numbers and some people comes with that attitude and want to impose them outside in places like bar lounge. Community cannot allow you to practice it outside and you end up fighting with people and go back to jail. There is a gang culture in jail such as 28, 26 and big five so community cannot allow a person to practice this culture outside. You see a person bragging that I’m 28 I stab a person and consequently stab someone and go back in jail”. (P3)*

*“Gangster contributed a lot to reoffending because such a person does not listen to anyone. A gang member also want to associate himself with notorious people even when he is outside. They usually want to prove to others that they are brave and consequently reoffended and go back to jail”. (P7)*

Antisocial behaviour and criminal activities earn respect with gangsters. The relationship of social networks and crime is holistically explained through the social learning processes, whereby gang members receive positive reinforcement from their social group, for participation in criminal behaviour. This positive reinforcement acts as a stimulus for criminal behaviour, which consequently led to re-offending. Gangsterism, hence, is associated with reoffending behaviour. As noted by Walters (2016:1160), social network pressure is one of the significant risk factors of recidivism; Law and Padayachee, (2012:2) echoed that gangsterism undermines the rehabilitative efforts as it sow the seeds of recidivism behaviour. As noted from the findings of this study, gangsterism contributes to re-offending behaviour since gang members continue to engage in criminal activities; after undergoing rehabilitation under the guise of bravado. Gangsterism culture or norm which restricts members from abandon the gang, subsequently compels them to reoffend. Gang members, hence, reoffend as a way of conforming to the gang norms and culture; these also differentiate the gangs.



Social network can be either developmental or destructive if not well managed. Some scholars argue that social network may play a dual role as these peer groups may either play an important role in the shaping of behaviour, wherein they can be perceived as a source of comfort and security, or a source of strain in instances of social rejection. In contrast, social isolation may be seen as a contributory factor of re-offending criminal behaviour (Cronje, 2017:83). Further evidence also submits that violent rejection can also result in increased aggression (Jones, 2013:21). The researcher, therefore, concludes that social network, in particular gangsterism, is a contributory factor of recidivism.

#### **4.3.1.6 Subtheme 1.6: Lack of self-acceptance**

This is a situation where a person aspires things which are above his means. It is referred to as “lack of self-acceptance” or “overambitious”. Self-awareness helps one to understand his potential and abilities as well as his weaknesses; it is also a key towards building self-acceptance and assertiveness. Lack of self-awareness impacts negatively in the development of self-acceptance, and makes one to always aspire greater things which are above his means (overambitious). This consequently swayed released offenders to be involved in criminal activities as they endeavor to bridge the gap of affordability. Participants’ narratives revealed that lack of self-acceptance contributes to their recidivism behaviour. They indicated that they have recommitted criminal offences such as house breaking, theft and shoplifting because they wanted the money to buy expensive things, such as trademarks clothes or sneakers so that they can emulate other people. Participants have these points to say on the issue:

*“You look at someone wearing new sneakers and you begin to emulate them forgetting that you can’t afford them. You simply think of stealing in order to get them or to get the money to purchase them. So most of the people find it hard to admit that they can’t afford it and they ultimately resort on criminal activities”. (P14)*

*“Yes, the desire to put on fancy clothes while having no money. Things like All stars and other expensive clothes, you end up stealing because you have no money and you want to be like others. A person develop the idea of stealing after realizing that he is unable to get his wish. This makes one to go back to jail and stay there”. (P3)*

*“This is the most contributory factor of reoffending. You know when I see you outclassing me as my peer, I endeavor to have what you have but I end up stealing since I’m unemployed as a means of striving to be at par with you. If you are wearing Adidas sneaker and I don’t have, lack of self-acceptance impelled me to go and commit shoplifting”. (P7)*

Lack of self-acceptance, therefore, drives people to re-offend because they want to live lavish lifestyle which is above their means. Participants give accounts of how they have re-offended because they wanted to get the money to ‘shine’ and to amuse their ‘slay queens’ (girlfriends). This criminal reoffending factor is also evident in people who have monthly income but aspire for things which are above their means. Participants have these points to say:

*“There are situation where one loves good things like flamboyant cars, so what will this person do if he is unemployed? Such a person need to steal that car because he cannot afford it or he steal the money to buy such car. Is like a person who love good ladies, you can’t get them if you don’t have money because she will ask you where are you employed when you proposed her. This is the situation which influence you to commit crime in order to get the money to impress that person. Most of the things that makes people to reoffend like in my situation when I have committed arm robbery was because of being overambitious, I love good things. (P9)*

*“Yes, you end up stealing. Women can also cause you to reoffend as they demand you to buy them this and that, you end up stealing because you don’t have money. They demand expensive brand name wears so you end up stealing. Yes, women influence you to reoffend”. (P3)*

*“I was influenced by being ambitious to other people’s properties while having no money to purchase those items and not working. The idea of committing crime crop inn thinking that the gains from crime will change my life”. (P4)*

Casper (2018:28) revealed that lack of self-worth, trust and confidence are sources of great concern to released offenders as these are likely to exacerbate the obstacles already evident in rehabilitation efforts and eventually lead to reoffending. The above author’s findings partially correspond with those of this study as they also show that being overambitious or lack of self-acceptance is a critical factor in reoffending. Lack of self-acceptance and being over-ambitious propel the released offenders to recommit property crime, such as theft, shoplifting, robbery and house breaking as they endeavor to get the money to buy their desired expensive items. Lack of self-acceptance does not only plague the unemployed, no, it cut across all sectors of the population as it also affect those who are employed but are failing to live within their means but want a “go-getter life”. The problem is that the gains from these criminal activities becomes a permanent source of “income” where offenders keep on reoffending. The researcher, hence, concludes that lack of self-acceptance is a contributory factor for recidivism among adult male offenders.

#### **4.3.2 Alcohol and substances abuse**

The abuse of drugs refers to illegal over-indulgence in the use of drugs (Okoiye and Adebisi, 2015: 42). Yinusa (2015) as recorded in Idowu (2017:3) postulates that, substance abuse refers to the unlawful consumption of narcotic drugs, chemical or inhalants, concoctions and organic substances by criminals; it also the unacceptable medical and cultural patterns of usage, through swallowing, inhaling, smoking, drinking, chewing, sniffing and injection. Findings of this study illustrate that the use of alcohol and drugs is a common trend among the male adult reoffenders, where the frequently-abused drugs are alcohol, dagga, pills such as mandrax and cocaine. The abuse of alcohol and drugs is another contributory factor of re-offending. All the interviewed participants have cited the abuse of alcohol and drugs as a factor that influences them and other people to re-offend. Almost all of the participants’ criminal offences were said to have been

committed under the influence of alcohol or drugs. The abuse of alcohol and drugs contribute to reoffending in different ways. Some participants revealed that they have re-committed property crimes such as thefts, house-breaking and robbery because of the need for money to quench their unwavering desire for alcohol and drugs. In addition, participants revealed that the abuse of alcohol and drugs makes them so intoxicated that they lose control of their mind and recommit crimes, without fear.

#### **4.3.2.1 Subtheme 2.1: Need to get alcohol and drugs**

The relationship between crime and the abuse of alcohol and drug substances is holistic in the sense that it includes crimes to manufacture, plant, use, possess, sell, and distribute classified drugs. Most of the drugs are sold at a high price and this demands that the consumers have enough money for procuring them; getting the money becomes a challenge for discharged offenders who do not have a legal regular source of income. Craving for alcohol and drugs pushes offenders to relapse into criminal activities, where they break into alcohol outlets with the intention of stealing alcohol and drugs. Participants' revealed the following:

*"I would make it a point that I get a beer even if I was having cigarette. There is nothing painful than seeing other people drinking while you have nothing to drink. This prompt me to improvise means of getting it and me ended break the alcohol outlet and committed theft".*  
(P2)

*"I took the entire stock home so that I will be able to shine with it outside like others because at that time I was deep into the abuse of alcohol. I was motivated by the need for alcohol. I would not have committed it if I was not craving for it. The intention was not to sell it but to drink it".* (P2)

Apart from breaking into alcohol outlets, discharged offender commit property crime such as robbery, theft, shoplifting, car theft and house-breaking with the intention of getting cash or to sell

the stolen items. The need for alcohol and drugs is a contributory factor for recidivism. Participants said the following.

*“Where are you going to get money if you are unemployed that is the situation where you are tempted to steal in order to get the money to buy these substances”. (P11)*

*“By that time I was deep in the abuse of drug substances and I began to commit house breaking and theft in the local shop. The most thing which I steal was cigarette. I was unable to leave the store without cigarette, in case I failed to get it I would try to steal anything which I will sell to buy drug substances because I smoke it”. (P2)*

*“In this one I went to another family and steal three refrigerators. The intention was to sell them since I was having a buyer who telephonically called and indicated that he is looking for a refrigerator. I went to that family and stole them. He took them with his car and give me the money. The abuse of drug substances was also a factor to this one because that where I squandered my money. A person who smoke cigarette and drink alcohol commit theft or robbery as a way of getting money to buy his stuff”. (P2)*

The findings of this study confirm that the abuse of alcohol and drugs contributes to re-offending; released offenders recommit property crimes, such as thefts, robbery, shoplifting, house breaking and hijacking as they endeavor to get money to support their abuse of alcohol and drugs' habit; others even break into alcohol outlets just to steal alcohol for consumption. These findings are supported by Idowu (2017:4) who posits that alcohol and drug users can literally do anything, such as theft, prostitution and drug peddling in order to get the money to satisfy their habits. Corresponding to these findings, Abadi and Tegeng (2018:1) also indicate that the need to commit crimes by drug addicts and alcoholics is stirred by the yearning to support their habits. Such kinds of offenders remain at high risk as they often spend short-term sentences which deprive them of enough time for intensive rehabilitation program. In agreement, Onyango *et al.*, (2018:26) demonstrated that released offenders use crime as a source of money to buy alcohol and drugs.

The authors postulate that punishment has no effect on a person who abuses alcohol and drugs. Yorgancioglu (2018:6) affirms that released offenders commit crime in order to fund their alcohol and drug-abuse habits.

#### **4.3.2.2 Sub-theme 2.2: Intoxication**

The abuse of alcohol and drugs increases the prospect of repeated criminal behaviour as the abuse takes control of the conscious mind of a person when one is intoxicated. Participants revealed that they lose control of their mind and recommitted crime when they are under the influence of alcohol and drugs. Others revealed that they became brave and fearless when they are intoxicated and it becomes easy for them to commit and recommit criminal offences; they only regret about them later. Intoxication makes the offender to forget the gains of the previously-attended rehabilitation programmes. Participants further revealed that they would not have committed criminal offences had it not been because they were intoxicated. Participants made the following remarks:

*“I can emphasize that the abuse of drugs contribute to the continuous commission of crime. There are pills which are drugs such as heroin, rock, and tic. These are the pills which contaminate the mind of a person like me, I’m talking from experience. You lose your mind once you use those pills and you don’t realize or understand what you do. You just get surprised when you are told that you have committed crime. You asked yourself but failed to recall what happened because you were intoxicated by those pills and your oblongata was suppressed by the drug pills. You become a fearless person and you always want to be number one on criminal activities because of those pills. These are the most influence which are troubling people all over the country. Most of the criminals are coming in and out of prison because of these pills”. (P10)*

*“I used to lose my mind when I was drunk and having smoked dagga. I then begin to fight with other people. I used to get angry easily even by small things and provoke a fight instantly. Alcohol and Dagga are the contributory factors, in fact all my criminal convictions*

*were due to these things. I was untouchable when I was under the influence of alcohol and Dagga. Whoever provoke me was a fight". (P3)*

*"This influence me because there are drug substances which caused me to forget myself when I was intoxicated. Is like in my case I got arrested after I sniffed glue, got intoxicated and committed crime while I was under the influence of drug substances". (P5)*

Alcohol and drugs have a remarkable influence over a person's ability to make a rational decision. One can argue that it is not easy to identify the relationship between the abuse of alcohol, drugs and recidivism behaviour. This is so because not every person who abuses alcohol and drugs, recidivate, however, evidence gathered from the participants indicate that the abuse of alcohol and drug contribute directly, to criminal reoffending behavior, in two different dimensions - need to get alcohol and drugs and intoxication. The abuse of alcohol and drugs relate to crime through the effects they have on the user's behaviour or mind when he is intoxicated. A person who is under the influence of alcohol and drugs tend - to lose his mind, self-control, develops weaken personal judgement and eventually commit and recommit crime, fearlessly and unconsciously. An intoxicated person do dreadful things which he cannot or will not do when he is sober minded; these people turn to forget the consequences of their re-offending criminal behaviour and only regret about them once they are arrested. Participants' account conclude that the need to get money to purchase alcohol and drug substances prompt the discharged offender to commit property crime.

A study conducted by Yorgancioglu (2018:6) affirms that the abuse of alcohol and drug substances to the extent where one is intoxicated, diminishes a person's judgment and reduces self-consciousness, socially-defined rules of behaviour and gives a person false bravery to commit crimes. The author takes it further to indicate that punitive measures, such as long prison sentences have little meaning when a person is intoxicated. Andrews and Bonta, (2010:283) in their research, also note that the abuse of drugs increases the likelihood of frequent criminal behaviour. Additionally, Cronje (2017:85) postulates that the use of drugs prompts one to associate

with deviant individuals. Furthermore, the National Institute on Drug Abuse - NIDA, (2014) reports that individuals who use unlawful drugs and alcohol or who are intoxicated have the propensity to commit and recommit crimes involving violence and stealing of properties. Muntingh and Gould (2010) reiterated that the abuse of alcohol and drug contribute to criminal behaviour, however, they caution against viewing substance abuse in isolation. The authors emphasize that the type of substances abused needs to be taken into account, as well as sociological and familial factors. Familial factors dispose individuals who came from homes where one of the parents was an alcoholic to display similar behaviour (Muntingh & Gould, 2010:7). The researcher conclusively affirms that the abuse of alcohol and drug contributes to recidivism.

#### **4.3.3 Theme 3: Availability of weapons**

The availability of weapons such as gun, knife, pangas and any other fighting weapons provides an edge and compulsion to commit and recommit crime. The easy availability of illegal firearm in SA is another primary instigator of criminal offences as it makes offenders not to think twice about re-offending and its legal consequences. The availability of weapon makes a person to develop a “bossy” attitude which gives rise to an attitude of bravado and a sense that one is untouchable, unstoppable and one can subdue all one’s opponents. The availability of weapon is more related to property offences, such as robbery, house breakings, car thefts, armed robbery and assault cases, such as assault GBH, murder and rape. The following were said by the participants:

*“The availability of weapon build pride and you feel like you are a boss. If you go with a weapon at the alcohol outlet, no one should talk to you wrongly. I mean your language is all about demanding, even when you need something you demand it to be given to you. A weapon is used if someone refused to let go of what he has”. (P10)*

*“He told me that money is galore out there. I asked him how we can make this money and he said that he is having a gun. The availability of weapon gives you an urge to commit*



*crime knowing that you can subdue your foe. You don't get the compulsion if there is no weapon to use". (P9)*

*"My intention for carrying a knife was not for home use but to stab other people. A knife made me to feel like a boss and always want to provoke other people for a fight. Upon my arrival I did not want to solve it but just produce my knife and stabbed him". (P2)*

The availability of weapon is a key factor in the commission of criminal activities. The researcher contends that the availability of weapons, such as firearm, knife and panga are instrumental in the commission of crime. It was revealed that firearms provide a simple means of committing a crime, while allowing offenders some distance or detachment from their victims (Yorgancioglu, 2018:7). In support, Tegeng and Abadi (2018:1) maintain that the availability of weapon is a significant factor that instigates criminals to reoffend. These scholars, hence, confirms the discovery of this study - that the availability of weapon such as firearm, knife and pangas build confidence and instill pride to commit crime, as these weapons make one to feel that one is unstoppable and can easily subdue opponents. Participants agree that the availability of weapons, such as firearm, knives and pangas gives them the urge and compulsion to commit crimes, such as robbery, house breaking, rape and murder. The availability of weapon is a stimulus which makes one to develop an attitude of bravado and behave like a boss, bragging about oneself that no one can dare "mess-up" with one; this, eventually sways a person to recommit crime. The researcher concludes that the availability of weapon gives one an urge and compulsion to commit crime, knowing that one can easily subdue opponents.

#### **4.3.4 Theme 4: Socio-economic factors**

This refers to social and economic factors that contribute to recidivism. For the purpose of this study, the list include criminal record, lack of starter pack, illegal business, prison environment, retributive sentences and unemployment.

#### 4.3.4.1 Subtheme 4.1: Criminal record

According to the Criminal Procedure Amendment Act 65 of 2008 (SA 2008), all convicted offenders acquire a criminal record which is recorded in the National Criminal Record Centre. Furthermore, Children Act 38 of 2005 (SA 2005) also made a provision to register sex offenders in the sex offenders' register; registered offenders have limited opportunities since they are restricted from working with children. Criminal record can only be expunged after a given period, depending on the type of the offence. It becomes difficult to expunge criminal record for a serious cases. Criminal record makes the life of an ex-offender difficult; it becomes a stumbling block to his full rehabilitation and reintegration. Most of the adult male offenders are expected to maintain their families as they are the breadwinners but a criminal record makes it hard for them to be employed. Criminal record also made it hard for the discharged offender to obtain other privileges, such as firearm licenses, public drivers' license (PDP) that broaden the opportunity for being employed. Participants' narratives affirm the given assertions. Criminal records prevent employers from employing a person with criminal record, as such released offenders turn to resort to more criminal activities as ways of generating money for survival. Criminal records become a secondary sentence to the discharged offenders as it remains hanging around their necks, thereby, obstructing their opportunities for bettering their lives, through legal means. Participants' narratives reveal the following:

*“What I’m trying to say is that unemployment is a factor on criminal reoffending. This is also compounded by the issue of criminal record (finger print). I have tried to ask someone about this issue as I want to apply for public driving permit (PDP). The respond was that just go and attempt it but my criminal conviction does not permit me to be awarded a PDP. What I have found out is that our law oppressed people with criminal record. You will have needs for basic need but criminal record will stand against you. I cannot get a fire arm license a certificate which can broaden my opportunity for being employed. Okay I obtain my driver’s*

*license but they declined me to have PDP why did not they refused or tell me from the onset. What do they think am going to do with this license without having other permits?" (P8)*

*Most people say it in Venda that "**u ngasi shavhe mvula wo na naiwa**" meaning that "you cannot refrain from something that have already dented or destroyed you". This is a saying but it is a factor that makes many discharged offenders to reoffend because they got stuck with the criminal record. There is huge relationship because such a person becomes apathetic the moment he think about his criminal record. Knowing that he cannot be employed he resort on continuing to commit crime for a living". (P10)*

*"Criminal record is not a good thing, it is a dangerous thing because you can't be employed. Everywhere they check your criminal record and the system will produce your criminal record. It relate in this fashion, you know that you can't provide food at home if you are unemployed. Failure to provide food compelled you to steal and you consequently got arrested. Sometimes you find yourself involved in the selling of drugs in order to provide food at home. Like in my situation I'm a breadwinner having to provide for my wife and children so everyone looked at me for survival. So it is difficult to get a proper job because of this criminal record and you ultimately got tempted to be involved in illegal activities where you consequently get arrested and convicted". (P12)*

A criminal record is a stumbling block to effective rehabilitation and most of the ex-offenders are stuck with it as they are unable to better their life through legal means. These records ultimately push offenders to recidivate as they try to find means of maintaining themselves and their families. In support, Nally *et al.*, (2014:17), affirm that released offenders face great possibility of being unemployed after release from correctional centres, due to their criminal records. They, consequently, are likely to become recidivists as they are unable to be, legally, financially sufficient

for an independent living in the community. Additionally, Idowu (2017:5) postulates that a criminal record makes the released offenders to be discriminated against when it comes to job opportunities, hence, pushing them to re-offend.

A criminal record then becomes a secondary sentence to the released offenders as it deprives them of opportunities for employment, which can assist them to make amendments in their lives. Even though criminal record can be expunged, the challenge is that the time frame of its expungement come after the likely time of reoffending. The prospective time for the expungement of criminal record is ten years (Criminal Procedure Amendment, Act 65 of 2008, SA 2008), whereas the likely time of reoffending is during the first two to three years of released (Alper et al., 2018:4; Ugwuoke, 2015:1; Brown, 2011:332). This implies that offenders are more likely to reoffend before they reach the likely expungement period. Be that as it is, a criminal record should not be seen as a death penalty as it can be expunged. Section 271(A)(b) of Criminal Procedure Amendment Act 65 of 2008 (SA 2008) provides a provision for the expungement of criminal records. The observed challenge from the participants' narratives was that most of them had no knowledge of criminal records' expungement, hence, they remain affected by them even when such records are due for expungement; they then eventually relapse into criminal behaviour. They see themselves as wrong candidates for proper job and dare not make any efforts because they have already segregated themselves.

It is also argued by optimistic discharged offenders and proponents of the developmental approach that one can resort to self-reliance through the initiation of job creation, based on the acquired vocational skills in prison. Issues like, lack of "starter-packs" to establish small businesses, and stigma also made it difficult for ex-offenders to have support from the community. The researcher concludes that a criminal record is a contributory factor for recidivism among adult male offenders.

#### 4.3.4.2 Subtheme 4.2: Lack of starter packs

A starter pack refers to a package kit which can enable the released offender to start an income-generating business. The kit can be in a form of relevant tools for the acquired vocational skills, such as a welding machine, rods, welding helmet, and all the necessary tools; this also include business skills, such as marketing. Released offenders, however, came back home with nothing tangible, except their qualifications and vocational certificates. Released offenders came back home empowered and enthusiastic to show-case their skills but they are greeted with a “high hurdle” to jump. These starter packs are required for one to start an income-generating business; with no income or guarantee to get a loan, failure to get a starter pack and coupled with unemployment frustrate offenders and ultimately they resort to illegal means for survival. Starter packs are essential enablers for a complete rehabilitation for the offender who has acquired vocational skills but is unable to establish his own business. The Department of Correctional Services as the custodian of offenders, is the one which is supposed to provide it in a form of after-care and reintegration services. This can also help to mitigate the challenge of unemployment and criminal record which serve as stumbling blocks and contributory factors for recidivism. Participants assert that lack of starter packs is a contributory factor to reoffending behaviour because they often found themselves faced with the challenges of unemployment and a criminal record, with no mitigation plan. This challenges ultimately sway them to reoffend as they struggle to make a living through legal means. Participants had this to say:

*“I think there is a need for having some programme that can help the released offenders who are having skills in various fields. For example starter pack on welding in a form of welding machine and all the necessary tools. This system can work even if it is offered in form of long term loan. By so doing that I think that prison would have completed its task of empowerment and building self-reliance”. (P8)*

*“I think it should be unforgivable to find a person given a starter pack just sited doing nothing and resorting to relapse on criminal activities. It is not good to find a person with about 30 certificates of different vocational training doing nothing”. (P8)*

*“You can have all qualifications but you need money to initiate everything. It like now if you are instructed to break this stone, you will need a hammer to break it. So you need to buy that hammer because you can’t depend on borrowing every day”. (P10)*

Findings of this study demonstrate that the process of reintegration is not complete without providing a starter pack to the skilled released offenders who have no financial means of acquiring tools for their skills. This shortage of tools for their trade negate the gains of their rehabilitation processes and push them to recidivate as they try to find means for survival. These sentiments are shared by other studies which show that the government’s inability to support the released offender’s reintegration into the society to become law-abiding and productive citizens is contributing greatly to the high rate of recidivism (Padayachee & Smit, 2012:2). This contributory factor was also identified by Otu (2015:139) who states that releasing the offender without proper after-care programmes and gadgets such as vocational tools that would enable them to be self-reliant or secure meaningful employment in the government or private sectors, presages great possibilities for the offender relapsing into criminal behaviour. Tegeng and Abadi (2018:4) posit that community members show lack of trust in the rehabilitation of the released offenders and subsequently deny them business start-ups, a situation which consequently drive them to recidivate as they do not have cash to inject into a business venture. It is a fact that lack of the provision of starter pack to the skillful released offenders contribute to recidivism.

#### **4.3.4.3 Sub-theme 4.3: Illegal business**

This refers to the illicit drug dealing business which is conducted by the inmates in prison and also include the smuggling in of cellphones. Inmates are said to be making money in prison from this illegal drug dealings and cellphones’ business. Different types of drugs, in particular, dagga are

said to be smuggled into prisons for business purposes. This drug-dealing business is done with the aid of corrupt prison warders (officials) who help to conceal the illicit dealings and assist in the smuggling of these illegal drugs and cellphones. Some of the prison warders are said to be the moguls of these drug -dealing business while others are benefiting from kickbacks which come as reward for concealing the illicit dealings. Drug dealing is said to be the quickest way of making money in prison for the inmates. Inmates who are running these businesses often reoffend in order to get the opportunity to run their businesses in jail, hence, some of these inmates also do not take their parole and insist on serving their whole sentence in jail. The following were revealed by the participants.

*“In prison, the prison warder who is supposed to arrest me for selling dagga is the one who help to smuggle dagga inside. The prison warder is the one who tipped us when there is going to be a special searching of EST and he is the one who took our illegal items like cell phones and hide them in his shelf. It simple that prison wader who supply me with illegal items is obliged to warn me about things to happen. This is because I’m working for him and he is making a living from my illegal dealings. If he gives me an “Aram” of basket of Dagga which was purchased by say R200 outside such thing can profit R3000 inside. In that instance I take R1000 and gave it to the outside person who is providing the stock and R500 is given to the prison wader who is smuggling things and providing cover for me”. (P8)*

*The other thing that contribute is that some people open illegal drug dealing business in jail. They reoffend after realizing that they have lost their jail business opportunity. Reason for their reoffending is to get opportunity to continue with their business inside. Such kind of people constantly reoffend to go back to jail. There are corrupt officials who are not ethical. An ethical official is not loved by the inmates. This situation is also a contributory factor to reoffending. This influence people to reoffend knowing that there is that official who works*

*in the kitchen and he will do so-so.. so... so. The official will give him his dagga to sell them to the inmate. This kind of people keeps on reoffending". (P3)*

*"Some even reject parole and indicated that **"Ndi to da u rwa tshigwevho tshanga nga ndishi"** (meaning that I want to complete my full sentence right inside jail). This is because he knows that he is benefiting right inside. He knows that he is getting money inside. Inmates are selling drugs in jail as such a person who is having a business in jail will always want to go back in jail for his business sake. There is a corruption of bribing the prison waders while other have employed the inmates to run their business". (P3)*

The study discovered that the scourge of corruption where police official are in cohort with criminal is causing a rise in recidivism. Such is observed in many ways where corrupt prison officials aid in the smuggling of illicit drugs and cellphones that are sold in jail. Corrupt officials hide the criminal activities that are happening in prison and they in turn receive golden handshake as rewards for their dirty work. Some corrupt officials are moguls of illegal drug-dealing businesses right in prison. This situation prompts released offenders who are running business in the prison to relapse once they are released, while others even reject parole. They deliberately recommit crime as it is the only way to put themselves back in prison. This illegal conduct is also demonstrated by police officials outside, whereby they partake in the illegal dealings and others conceal illegal dealings. This kind of conduct is contributing in the rise of recidivism because it defeats the course of rehabilitation.

#### **4.3.4.4 Subtheme 4.4: Prison environment**

Correctional Centres (prisons) do not classify people in terms of their risk status. High-risk offenders are put together with low-risk offenders. Lack of classification of offenders according to their risk level, provides an opportunity for breeding and empowering low-risk offenders into becoming high-risk offenders where they ultimately re-offended soon after their release.



Participants revealed that inmates spent most of their time chatting about their committed crime and their criminal life experience where they even exaggerate their criminal activities. Mixing of inmates provides a fertile ground for capacitating and empowering each other on advanced criminal skills where they also encouraged each other to re-offend. Inmates further encourage each other to pay revenge on their victims whom they accused did not respect them; the inmates then believe the victims need to be taught a lesson once they are released. This leads them to reoffend as they strive to fulfill this commitment. Participants gave the following narratives:

*“I mean we encourage each other to reoffend while in prison. So I got equipped with new criminal activities. This makes me to upgrade the standard of my criminal activities. I used to break shops and committed theft. I then started to commit robberies and rob people on the street after my release. I was then able to make calculated moves to orchestrate a successful robbery. I was able to spot a person having money and commit robbery. I remembered well the day in which I robbed a certain old woman who was selling in the social grants pay point whereby I took her wallet having R12000 inside it”. (P2)*

*“Usually the one that influence each other are the ones coming from the same area but having arrested for different cases. They started sharing about their criminal offences where one will revealed that he was arrested for theft the other one indicated that he was arrested for assault. They ultimately influence each other saying that your victim had undermined or disrespect you and we must deal with him when we got released here. They end up dealing with such person and consequently reoffended”. (P5)*

In addition, the culture of prison gangsterism also contributes to recidivism behaviour both in and outside prison. Inmates are compelled to recommit crime right in prisons, whereby, an inmate is given a weapon and commanded to stab or kill another inmate. Inmates are forced to reoffend in prison as a way of showing compliance to ritualistic gang norms. The culture of gangsterism is a driving force in prison infights. Participants' storyline revealed the following:

*“Other inmates, they can give you a knife and instruct you to stab someone while standing aside. You know there are lots of things happening in crime. Even outside one get employed to commit different sorts of crime while the boss is just relaxed at home collecting the revenues. The boss promised that he will come and rescue you if you are arrested but failed to fulfil his promise”. (P4)*

Furthermore, some offenders want to sustain this gangsterism culture even when they are outside and they ultimately re-offended. Gang members are controlled by an attitude of bravado where they often want to prove that they are fearless and brave and eventually re-offended in this quest. One participant gave the following account:

*“There is a gang culture in jail such as 28, 26 and big five so community cannot allow a person to practice this culture outside. You see a person bragging that I’m 28 I stab if you mess up with me and accordingly stab someone where he end up in jail”. (P3)*

The study findings further revealed that the prison environment also provides a breeding ground for deviant peer influence, where inmates influence each other to target a certain ethnic group like Indians and other foreign nationals; inmates claim that they need to be taught a lesson for opening criminal charges against them. They agree on a mission to terrorize their businesses by committing house breaking and thefts. This motivates them to reoffend as they endeavor to fulfill this mission. Participants had this to say:

*“Sometimes they discussed about the Indians shop owners saying that they (Indians) took them for granted and they need to be taught a lesson by stealing again from them again after release. Indeed they fulfil their commitment by stealing again. Yes they influence each other on bad things”. (P5)*

The reality of overcrowding in South Africa Correctional centers is creating a barrier to effective rehabilitation of the offenders. The situation of not categorizing inmates in terms of their risk level, hence, they are mixed in same holding cells, due to lack of space is contributing to re-offending

behaviour. This situation provides a refinement grounds for criminal activities. Such a situation erodes the rehabilitation efforts, as inmates turn to influence each other to pay revenge on their victims whom they accused of not respecting them and needing to be taught a lesson. This, in turn makes correctional centers a breeding place for criminal activities where inmates influence and empower each other to reoffend. This situation is in contrast with the White Paper on Corrections (SA 2005:12) which asserts that the purpose of the correctional system in South Africa is promotion of social responsibility and the enhancement of human development in order to prevent recidivism or the return to crime. The findings of this study corroborate Ugwuoke, (2015:10) who maintains that lack of proper classification of the inmates where first time offenders (low risk offenders) are locked together with recidivists (high-risk offenders) provides an opportunity for the high-risk offenders to groom the low-risk offenders into serious criminal activities which eventually led to their relapse into more serious criminal behaviour. In agreement, Tegeng and Abadi (2018: 7) reiterate that lack of a classification system of prisoners based on their types of crimes, contribute to recidivism. The authors contend that a situation where different categories of inmates are lumped together in one cell, enables low-risk offenders to tap into the experiences of the high-risk offenders.

Mears, Cochran and Culle (2015) argue that the effects of incarceration on recidivism are not uniform across offending populations but rather form part of a more multifaceted narrative and depend on the availability of other internal and external resources. The generalizable conclusion is that prison conditions, as outlined, contribute to re-offending behaviour.

#### **4.3.4.5 Subtheme 4.5: Retributive sentence**

Effective rehabilitation is informed by the effective risk assessment outcome of the offender in a form of pre-sentence assessment report which is conducted by a qualified PO. Risk assessment helps to profile an offender and his challenges; it identifies the contributory factors that led to the commission of crime. The court of law often imposes a blunt retributive sentence to the first time offenders who have committed minor offences with no consideration of risk assessment; these are

the kinds of the sentences that are not attached to rehabilitative programmes, and are just punitive in nature. These sentences may be imposed in the form of either little amounts of fine, suspended sentence, community correctional services or caution and discharge. Participants confessed that these kind of sentences do not help to rehabilitate them instead they serves as driving factor towards their re-offending since they did not exposed them to any rehabilitation programme. Participants made the following statements:

*“Is just that I did not felt a pain from my first sentence of Community Correctional services. It was just a community service with no rehabilitation programmes. In my second case I paid an admission of guilty fine of R500 instead of going to jail and still on this one no rehabilitation program offered to me. I have learned nothing and did not felt any pain”. (P13)*

*“You don’t get a lesson on minor offences but I have learned a lot from my last conviction and I don’t think I will go back to jail again. The said amount was too little such that I afforded to pay it being a student. It was just R50.00 from my pocket money. It is a fact that the first sentence was lenient on me. I was arrested on Sunday and got released on Monday after I paid the admission of guilty fine. I did not get the opportunity to learn”. (P7)*

*“Yes you get lighter sentence in minor offences. It is like in the case of assault GBH you find yourself being sentenced to six or three month imprisonment. Such sentence are given with a fine and even if you failed to pay the fine you don’t stay long in jail. You finish your sentence quicker because it was given with a fine. So you don’t feel much pain compared to a person given a heavier sentence”. (P9)*

The findings of this study resonate with other studies that posit that punitive-orientated treatment of offences, with no rehabilitative elements may actually increase the probability of recidivism (Gatoh, Omulema & Nassiuma, 2011: 263). Similarly, Abadi and Tegeng (2018:1) state that the need to commit crimes by drug addicts and alcoholics is stirred by their yearning to support their habits. Such kinds of offenders remain a high risk as they often spent short-term sentences which

deprive them of enough time for intensive rehabilitation program. This sentiment is reverberated in a conference paper compiled as an outcome document of a round-table discussion on recidivism among the Catholic Parliamentary Liaison Office, The National Institute for Crime Prevention and the Reintegration of Offenders (NICRO) and the Prison Care and Support Network (Law & Padayachee, 2012). Additionally, Lekalakala (2016:31) maintains that ineffective sentences that fail to deter criminal behavior, rather lead to re-offending behaviour. The researcher conclude that retributive sentences that are only punitive in nature with no rehabilitation programme contribute to recidivism behaviour.

#### **4.3.4.6 Subtheme 4.6: Unemployment**

The rate of recidivism is on the rise in South Africa as witnessed by prison overpopulation. The rate of unemployment is also escalating as presented by STASA. Unemployment is a contributory factor for recidivism; participants reported that attending rehabilitation programmes in the correctional Centres has effected a positive change in their life. The pressure of being a breadwinner, fulfilling community expectations coupled with lack of job opportunities, however, have pushed them to relapse into criminal activities as they endeavour to provide for themselves and their families. The majority of the participants in this study revealed that they were unemployed during the re-commission of their offences. They further indicated that they struggle to find jobs after their release from prison. This is compounded with the high rate of unemployment in the country, and worsened by participants' criminal records; these serve as a secondary sentences because these issues deny them opportunities for getting employed. Some participants revealed that they are unable to get employed even though they have vocational certificates for different trades simply because the certificates acquired in jail are branded with the name of the correction centre. They revealed that employer are not at ease to employ a person who is coming from jail because such kinds of persons are not trustworthy in the community. Participants have this to say:

*“Unemployed person steal because he is looking for a money which he is unable to get. He end up stealing in order to amuse himself and his friends. This is the factor which made*

*people to commit crime and go back in jail. The other thing is when looking at you driving this beautiful car and begin to emulate it to a point where I finally steal it". (P7)*

*"What I have seen in this world is that there is high level of unemployment and most of the people are committing crime like theft, house breaking robbery and many more just because jobs, it is very difficult to find a job". (P8)*

*"You don't think of many things if you are working but if we are just sited like this ey. If you think that there is nothing to do at home, you decide to go to **"Mahafheni"** traditional beer outlet and that is the place where one is going to commit crime. Most of the people have reoffended because of pressure of unemployment which I can term it poverty in English". (P10)*

Finding a job and maintaining an employment are critical challenges for the released offenders. This challenge is compounded by various reasons, such as the employers' reluctance to hire a person with a criminal record and the confinement period, during which they loss the opportunity to gain marketable work. Economic issues such as unemployment is considered a consistent contributory factor of recidivism. Authors such as Zakaria, Jaafar and Lazim (2018:8) posit that failure to find permanent, appropriate job and failure to stabilize economic resources are the main factors leading to recidivism behaviour. They went further to indicate that discharged offenders face overwhelming barriers to employment, including legal limitations (criminal record) and their lack of skills, education, and training. Similarly, Otu (2016:123) adds that unemployment is an economic contributory factor of recidivism.

Arguments have been raised that unemployment must not be seen as a direct contributory factor to recidivism. Proponents argued that for it to be consider a direct contributory factor of reoffending, one should establish a direct link between unemployment and crime. "The first challenge with this assumption is that the unemployed population in South Africa cannot be considered a homogenous group, and if one is to look at the unemployment statistics in comparison to the incarceration

percentage, one would find a vast difference, indicating that there is a larger population of individuals who are unemployed but who do not participate in crime. This distinction is important not only from an empirical perspective, but also in terms of the creation of stereotypes fuelling the perception of people living in poverty as criminals” (Cronje 2017:74). Despite these arguments, the fact remains that finding or maintaining an employment by a released offender can reduce the prospect of reoffending. With reference to the participants’ accounts, the researcher concludes that unemployment is the contributory factor of recidivism among adult male offenders.

#### **4.3.5 Theme 5: Stigma and name-calling (notorious alias)**

Stigma is a label which is attached to an individual that results in devaluing and is associated with undesirable characteristics (Chui & Cheng 2013: 672). Stigmatization contribute to the issue of criminals reoffending. Stigma happens in different ways. It happens in a situation where people continued to label one as a “criminal” or “offender”; it happens in a situation where offenders continue to be labelled and disadvantaged because of what is written on their vocational certificates that reflect the name of the corrections centre which provided the training. These serves as a snag for a complete reintegration into the community and eventually sway ex-offenders back to reoffending behaviour, as they struggle to survive. The issue of name-calling is, thus, a contributory factor of reoffending; it motivates the offender to commit crime as he endeavour to live-up- to the standard of his notorious alias name. Furthermore stigmatization leads to community isolation and rejection of the discharged offenders, based on their past involvement in criminal activities. This situation puts released offenders under enormous pressure in their efforts to reintegrate with the community. The isolation and rejection by the community members give them the urge to resort into criminal activities as they sought to prove a point to the community. On the other hand, pride which emanated as a defence mechanism to the social isolation and rejection eventually prompts them to reoffend. Social isolation and rejection due to this stigma force others to develop apathy which ultimately push them to become indifferent to life and to relapse into criminal activities. This is what the participants had said:

*“Because such person continue to brand me a criminal and his utterance works against me to be employed, I finally went out to commit crime in order to prove him because he was talking bad against me. This is what happened in many of us”. (P2)*

*“Why because people look at my past criminal life and turn a blind eye on my present and future life. This is assertion which led one to relapse into criminal activities simply because one is branded a criminal”. (P8)*

*“I end up walking with crutches and find out that most of the people are looking down on me, others ridicule me saying that he won’t do it (crime) again. I decided to throw that crutches away and begin to train myself. I did that with the intention of proving them wrong. That was the pride which I told you about. I wanted to prove them that I can do crime again. The other is provocation by community members. You know people are having different mentality. You find people talking through riddles saying have you seen me I’m back and I’m going to cause more troubles. My community did not receive me well, I remembered it well the other day when my neighbour said that “**Khelo lo vhuya**”, (look he is back) I wish he could rot in jail. This words seriously disturbed me”. (P10)*

The study findings discovered that stigmatization also occur in situations where offenders continue to be labelled criminals and are disadvantaged from being employed because of what is branded on their vocational certificates; the issued vocational certificates reflect the correction centres’ names which provided the training. One participant reported the following:

*“The problem for those certificates is that they are branded the prison name, such makes it difficult for me to be employed. I have those certificates and I can even show you, I know that even you cannot find it easy to employ me. People are reluctant to employ a criminal like me as they are fearing for the safety of their properties”. (P8)*

The study further discovered that notorious aliases and name-calling have an impact on the behaviour of a person. Being given a notorious alias name or name-calling contributes to recidivism



behaviour among male adult offenders. It was revealed that aliases or name-calling shape the behaviour of a person and it serves as a behaviour stimulator. Some people get carried away by their notorious aliases or names and ultimately strive to emulate the character of their given name. This was affirmed by released offenders. Aliases such as, “Van Dame” and “Bravo”, have inspired offenders to re-offend several times as they try to emulate the character and resilience of these characters. Participants had these comments to make:

*“It did not go well with me. Sometimes eeh, I remember someone gave me a name which elevated me and made me feel that I’m very dangerous. People got encourage by the given notorious alias names. I was given the name “Bravo”. I used to swagger myself by that name saying this is “Bravo” no one can temper with me. Yes the name uplifted me and made me to remain resolute on what I did. Yes the name can motivate a person and made one to do thing with confidence”. (P2)*

*“Friends can give you a nick name like Van Dame or any movies naughty star and you begin to emulate that character”. (P11)*

*“Hey jaa it does I have seen it on people having these notorious names and you found that person trying to live that movie life. I have seen it looking on the names of many inmates. You find someone called Laden, you know Laden is that one who have done.....” (P11)*

Labelling the offender a criminal, after release, denied him the prospect for behaviour modification. Stigmatization of released offenders drives recidivism rate up as it brings embarrassment to the released offender; this is wielded as a blunt instrument for reoffending. It ostracizes the released offender from the community and it is counterproductive to the course in rehabilitation and reintegration. As a way of dealing with this shame, the released offenders either develop pride or apathy which eventually acts as an impetus to recommit crime. It was uncovered that released offenders are confronted with a challenge of negative perceptions and being judged by the

communities in which they live (Mnqwazi, 2017: ii). These findings share similarities with the view of Onyango *et al.*, (2018:26) that social rejection and discrimination from community members ameliorate the released offender's chance to relapse into crime. Tegeng and Abadi (2018:8) also reveal that negative attitude from the community which stigmatizes and segregates the released offender from economic opportunities, coerces them to associate with other criminals and to reoffend more often. This sentiment collaborates the findings of this study which discovered that offenders are finding it hard to be employed using the vocational certificates awarded by DCS as the certificates continue to stigmatize and segregate them, therefore, the offenders eventually relapse into their criminal habits as a way of trying to make a living.

The issue of stigma is reverberated by Kanhukamwe (2015:30) who asserted that stigmatization further disgraces the released offender, preventing him from venturing into self-employment as the general public tend to shy away from that person; this leaves him with no chance to make income legally. This eventually sways him into re-offending behaviour in order to make a living. Idowu (2017:5) adds that the society makes it hard for the released offenders to get meaningful employment and to engage in gainful normal relationships because of stigmatization. This negative consideration and segregation draws them back to criminal life, and they tend to believe that the only place where they are accepted is in the prison. Other scholars share divided opinions where the proponents of stigma view it as a deterrent factor for criminal reoffending (Chui & Cheng 2013:673).

Being called notorious aliases and names have a great negative potential of shaping the character and resilience of a person. Findings of this study discovered that notorious aliases and names serve as a contributory factor for recidivism. This gives the released offender an urge to portray the character of the owner of his notorious alias or name. Participants further revealed that they become fearless and remain resolute on the course of their action whenever they are called by these aliases and names. In due consideration of the participants accounts, the researcher conclude that stigmatization is one contributory factor to recidivism among adult male offenders in

diverse ways. It happens in situations where people continued to label one as criminal; it happens in situations where offenders continue to be disadvantaged because of what is written on their vocational certificates that reflect the correction centres' name which provided the training. The researcher further concludes that notorious aliases and names are contributory factors for recidivism among adult male offenders.

#### **4.4. SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER**

This chapter presented the research findings that arose from the process of data collection with the participants and analysis. This chapter further offered the presentation and discussion of the demographic data of the research participants, followed by an overview of five themes, fourteen subthemes, eighteen categories and complementing storylines from the transcripts which were supported by literature. The first theme outlined the socio-demographic factors that contribute to recidivism of adult male offenders which included - familial factors, low academic achievement, deviant friends, family background, social network and lack of self-acceptance. The second presented theme is alcohol and drug abuse which identified offenders' need to get alcohol and drugs and intoxication as factors. The third theme focused on the availability of weapon. This was followed by theme four which presented socio-economic factors which included - criminal record, lack of starter pack, illegal businesses, prison environment, retributive sentence and unemployment. Lastly, theme five discussed stigma and name-calling.

## **CHAPTER 5:**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1. INTRODUCTION**

Findings of this study that emanated from the participants' narratives about the contributory factors of recidivism on male adult offenders were presented, guided by the process of data collection and analysis. These findings were presented according to themes, subthemes and categories. Literature support was used to complement, compare and contrast with the body of prevailing knowledge. The focus of this chapter is to present the summary of the research, draw conclusions and make recommendations pertaining to this study topic.

#### **5.2. SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTERS AND RESEARCH PROCESSES**

This section provides summary of the employed qualitative research process, major findings, conclusions reached, and recommendations.

##### **5.2.1. Summary of the chapters**

The goal of this study, as established in the beginning of the study, was to develop an in-depth understanding of the factors contributing to recidivism among adult male offenders. This was in order to provide a foundation for rehabilitation and reintegration service providers, who may use this study to provide more inclusive reintegration and rehabilitation services to offenders, with the view of reducing the high rate of recidivism.

Chapter one of this study provided a detailed overview of recidivism which included introduction and background of the study. Problem statement, rationale for the study, research question, goal

and objectives; ethical considerations, clarification of concepts, limitations of the study and the structure of the study report were also presented in this chapter.

A detailed review of literatures on factors contributing to recidivism among adult male offenders were presented in chapter two of this study. Grove, Burns and Grove (2012:93-94) postulate that a literature review is an extensive and systematic examination of books, publications and articles relevant to a specific research project. Previous studies conducted in the area of recidivism form part of this chapter. This chapter further narrates the theoretical perspectives that seek to provide better understanding of the contributory factors of recidivism among adult male offenders. The study employed the Ecological System theory (EST). This theory enabled the researcher to have a holistic understanding of the contributory factors of recidivism on adult male offenders.

A holistic description of how a qualitative research approach was utilised to understand the contributory factors of recidivism on adult male offenders was given in chapter three. This chapter offered a detailed research methodology which encompasses the application of the qualitative research approach, research designs, population and sampling, data collection and data-analysis methods.

Chapter four provides the findings of the study from the research process through the storyline of fourteen participants. Collected qualitative data from the participants' narratives were independently analysed by the researcher and agreed upon with the supervisor. EST was used to interpret the findings, where five themes, fourteen subthemes and eighteen categories emerged. The researcher used verbatim quotations from the transcriptions to present the findings. Literature support was used to control, compare and contrast the findings.

EST is premised on the assumption that a person's behaviour is influenced by the different environmental systems. EST helps us understand why we act the way we do in different circumstances or environments. The theory posits the dependency between man and the environment (Härkönen, 2007:2). The use of this theory assisted the researcher during data

analysis to identify the environmental factors (themes and sub-themes) that contribute to recidivism behaviour of adult male offenders.

### **5.2.2. Summary of the research process**

The researcher applied a qualitative approach in the endeavour to answer the research question which sought to understand the contributory factors of recidivism among male adult offenders. The application of exploratory design enabled the researcher to gain a deeper understanding of the factors that contribute to recidivism of adult male offenders. The researcher was able to elicit data on the adult male offenders' lived experience about the factors that led them to re-offend. Interviewing the participants at venues of their choice helped to develop a better understanding of the experiences that led them to re-offend. A detailed description of the factors that contribute to recidivism of adult male offender is provided in Chapter four of this research report.

The following research question enabled the researcher to obtain relevant data to address the purpose of this study:

#### **What are the factors that contribute to recidivism among adult males?**

The following overall goal entrenched the study and aided the researcher to understand its purpose.

#### **To develop an in-depth understanding of the factors contributing to recidivism among adult male offenders.**

This goal was achieved through the proper application of a research methodology and adherence to ethical consideration. The identified research designs were instrumental in the realisation of this goal, as they provided guidelines to the researcher that made it possible to collect, analyse and verify data, which delivered findings on the factors that contribute to recidivism of adult male offenders. The researcher affirms that exploratory research design was appropriate as little was known about the contributory factors of recidivism among adult male offenders. The researcher

further attest that the use of phenomenological research design was helpful because it assisted him to elicit data from the adult male offenders on their lived experience; about the factors that led them to re-offend. The researcher additionally concludes that the use of contextual and descriptive research design was useful because it allowed the researcher to interview the participants in their actual world. A detailed description of the factors that contribute to recidivism of adult male offenders by looking into their demographic aspects, was provided in Chapter four of this research report.

The realization of this goal was guided by the following objectives:

- To explore the factors that contribute to recidivism among adult male offenders.
- To describe, as findings, the factors contributing to recidivism among adult male offenders.
- To draw conclusion about the factors contributing to recidivism and make recommendations thereof, for reducing recidivism growth.

A process-product relationship in explorative and descriptive research design existed in this study. The researcher explored the contributory factors of recidivism through probing guided by semi-structured open-ended interview guide, then described the data looking into the characteristics of the participants and later drew conclusions which were succeeded by recommendations.

The researcher employed purposive and snowball sampling, guided by an inclusive criteria to sample fourteen participants who partook in this study. Sampling size was not predetermined but guided by the principle of data saturation. Sampled participants' age ranges from 22 to 65 years; the majority of these participants had more than three criminal convictions with the exception of three participants who had two criminal convictions. Most of the offences (23 cases) involved properties (property offences) committed in the form of theft, house breaking, robbery, dealing with drugs and malicious damage to properties. Four of the cases were sexual offences in a form of rape and indecent assault, while 13 were assault cases in a form of murder, assault GBH and assault common. A large number of the participants were unemployed during their re-offending

period. None of the participants has a tertiary qualification and all participants have a record of abusing alcohol and drugs. Twelve of these participants were on parole during the data collection period and only two have completed their sentence in 2019 and 2020.

Two research was subjected to a pilot study and this allowed the researcher to test the feasibility of the interview protocol and data collection method as articulated in the study. This process assisted the researcher to refine his interview skills, evaluate his readiness and the ability to conduct an effective and efficient qualitative study. Semi-structured interviews were audio-recorded after permission was received from the participants. The six stages of thematic data analysis as defined by Braun and Clarke (2006:16) provided a useful framework for the data analysis. From this process, five themes, fourteen sub-themes and eighteen categories were developed and used in the presentation of the findings in chapter four.

Following are the summary of the findings, conclusion and recommendation.

### **5. 3. SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS**

This section presents a summary of the five themes, fourteen subthemes and eighteen categories that emerged during the process of data analysis. It further presents the recommendations and conclusion based on the study findings.

#### **5.3.1. Theme 1: Socio-demographic factors**

Participants gave accounts of the socio-demographic factors that contribute to recidivism among adult male offenders. These include - family relationship, low academic achievement, deviant friends, familial factors, social network and lack of self-acceptance. The given synopsis below discusses each of these factors:

Family relationship: participants' storylines demonstrated that family relationship affect the manner in which one took decisions and a consideration of the intended consequences to oneself and



people that surround one. It was discovered that lack of family support contributes to recidivism behaviour.

Low academic achievement: the study affirmed that illiterate people have a lesser chance of being employed and if they are lucky to be employed; they often find a job which compensates them with low salaries. This makes it difficult for them to meet their basic needs and that of their family; a situation which ultimately sways them to reoffend.

Deviant friends: Participants' narratives attest that deviant friends influence the decision to recidivate. It was alluded that adult male offenders re-offend because of bad accompany, where they fear to be disowned by their deviant friends, because of the need to please or challenge their deviant friends.

Familial factors: detailed accounts from the participants outlined three familial factors which contribute to recidivism behaviour, these include - domestic violence, upbringing and being a child raised in the CYCC. It was pronounced that being subjected to bullying predisposed one to normalize bully behaviour. A family characterized by domestic violence, where parents fight right in front of the children breeds a culture of violence which culminate and manifest itself when they reached adult-hood; they, ultimately, recidivate. The study discovered that children who were raised in the CYCC are prone to recidivism behaviour simply because they develop anger from the rejection and abandonment of their parents or family members who neglected or abandoned them.

Participants' narratives further revealed that being part of social networks, such as gangsterism, motivated them to reoffend as a way of conforming to the gang, fear to be victimized if they left the gang and because of the attitude of bravado forced them to stay in such networks. This happens, both, in and outside prison. The study additionally discovered that lack of self-acceptance contributed to reoffending where adult males' recommitted criminal offences such as house breaking, theft and shoplifting prompted by being overambitious. Participants revealed that the desire to have what they do not have, such as money to amuse themselves and impress others

with expensive things like trademark clothes or sneakers and flamboyant cars, which they see other people owning, sways them to recidivate.

Based on the participants' accounts, the researcher concluded that the above mentioned socio-demographic factors (family relationship, low academic achievement, deviant friends, familial factors, social network and lack of self-acceptance) contribute to recidivism behaviour among adult male offenders.

### **5.3.2. Theme 2: Alcohol and substances abuse**

The illegal over-indulgence in the use of alcohol and drugs such as narcotics, chemical or inhalants, concoctions and organic substances by released offenders through swallowing, inhaling, smoking, drinking, chewing, sniffing and injection, contribute to recidivism. The study discovered that the abuse of alcohol and drugs contribute to reoffending in the following two different ways: need to get alcohol and drugs and intoxication. Participants' narrative revealed that they have recommitted property crimes such as thefts, house breaking and robbery because of the need for money to quench their unwavering desire for alcohol and drugs. The study findings affirm Yorgancioglu (2018:6)'s point that the abuse of alcohol and drugs to the extent where one is intoxicated diminishes person's thinking, reduces self-consciousness and morally standards and gives a person courage to commit crime. It is, therefore, concluded that the abuse of alcohol and drugs is a contributory factor to recidivism among adult male offenders.

### **5.3.3. Availability of weapon**

The availability of weapons is often associated with property criminal offences such as robbery, house breakings, car thefts, arm robbery and assault cases such as assault GBH, murder and rape. Participants asserted that the availability of weapons, such as firearm, knife and pangas, builds confidence and produces pride to commit and recommit crime, as it makes them feel that no one can stand before them, hence, can subdue their counterparts. These findings affirm Tegeng

and Abadi (2018:1) who assert that the availability of weapon is a factor that instigates man to reoffend.

#### **5.3.4. Socio-economic factors**

Participants' accounts painted a picture of six socio-economic factors that contribute to recidivism among adult male offenders; these are - criminal record, lack of starter packs, illegal business, prison environment, retributive sentences and unemployment. The study discovered that criminal record, which is acquired during conviction, serves as a secondary sentence to the released offenders. Participants revealed that criminal records cause them to sink deeper into criminal life knowing that they have been blacklisted and denied opportunities for bettering their life through legal means. Effective reintegration should provide a starter pack to the vocational-qualified released offenders to establish their own jobs since they are not easily employed. The study revealed that released offenders struggled to initiate their own job because they do not have starter pack or tools for the job. This situation pushed them to reoffend as they try to make a living.

It was revealed that inmates are making money in prison through illicit drug-dealing businesses and smuggling in of cell phones. These dealings are aided by corrupt prison warders who are owners while others benefited from kickbacks. Findings of the study discovered that released offenders who are involved in these business easily recidivate in order to continue to have the opportunity to make money in jail while others even reject their parole to stay and continue with these illicit businesses. The study further exposed that placing low and high-risk offenders in one place provide an opportunity for breeding criminals. Participants' accounts revealed that inmates shared their criminal experience where they empower each other with advanced criminal skills and also encourage each other to revenge and to reoffend. In addition, the prison culture of gangsterism also contributes to recidivism as it compelled or influence offenders to reoffend in prison and outside. Collected data revealed that the given lenient retributive sentence without rehabilitation programmes cause reoffending as it denied the offenders the opportunity learn from rehabilitation programmes. This findings resonate with Gato, Omulema & Nassiuma (2011:263), who posit that

punitive-orientated treatment of corrections with no rehabilitative elements may actually increase the probability of recidivism. It was further revealed that economic issues such as unemployment are consistent contributory factors of recidivism. Authors such as Zakaria, Jaafar and Lazim (2018:8) assert that failure to find a permanent, appropriate job and failure to stabilize economic resources are the main factors to recidivistic behaviour. It is concluded based on the participants' accounts that criminal records, lack of starter packs, illegal businesses, prison environment, retributive sentences and unemployment contribute to recidivism of adult male offenders.

#### **5.3.5. Stigma and name calling (notorious alias)**

The findings shows that released offenders face community isolation and rejection based on their past involvement in criminal activities. This also contributes to stigmatization which puts released offenders under enormous pressure and it works against their efforts into community reintegration and rehabilitation. The study discovered that name-calling also contributes to recidivism in that it stimulates the offender to emulate that character. Participants' narratives confirm that notorious aliases urge them to reoffend. The researcher concludes that stigma and name-calling contribute to recidivism of adult male offenders.

### **5.4. CONCLUSION ON THE FINDINGS**

Based on the above given findings, the researcher asserts that there are various factors that contribute to recidivism of adult male offenders. The researcher concludes that the following factors which were discovered by this study, contribute to recidivism of male adult offenders:

- Socio-demographic factors: This includes family relationship, low academic achievement, deviant friends, familial factors, social network and lack of self-acceptance.
- Alcohol and substances abuse: This involves the need for getting alcohol and illicit drugs as well as intoxication.
- Availability of weapon such as guns, knives and pangas.

- Socio-economic factors: This includes criminal record, lack of starter packs, illegal business, prison environment, retributive sentences and unemployment.
- Stigma and name-calling.

## **5.5. RECOMMENDATIONS BASED ON THE RESEARCH STUDY**

With due consideration of the research findings and the research processes, the researcher makes the following recommendations for practice, policy, DCS, and for future research.

### **5.5.1. Recommendation for practice**

Social work professionals should:

- Encourage family members and significant others of the inmate to have constant visits to their inmates and continue to them necessary support geared towards their journey for rehabilitation.
- Constantly organize family day as it helps to revive those who have forgotten and abandoned their inmates to instigate their ties.
- Strengthen the life skills programmes to be at a level that enable the offender to have a good sense of independent decision making, self-awareness, self-esteem, assertiveness and victim-empathy.
- Encourage the consideration and utilization of the pre-sentence report by the Social Worker in the Correctional Centre as it present holistic risk assessment findings of the offender that can assist in developing an Individual Development Plan (IDP) of the inmates.
- Organize and facilitate community education that helps to destigmatize the released offenders. Such campaigns should also help to advocate for proper reintegration and support for their employment.

### 5.5.2. Recommendation for policy

- Taking into account that public safety is affected by the huge number of crime committed by discharged or released offenders who were subjected into lenient retributive sentences without rehabilitation programmes, it is respectfully recommended that policy maker should develop a policy or statute which impose that rehabilitation programmes that help to rehabilitate the offender and to deter him from reoffending should be made compulsory for every lenient or non-custodial sentence.
- They should develop a policy which enforce that every convicted offender should be subjected to risk assessment process which should be presented before sentencing in a form of pre-sentence report, this will help the court to give a proper sentence attached with a relevant rehabilitation programme for individual offender.
- In order to minimize the negative impact of the criminal records, policy maker should consider avoiding subjecting discharged offenders to secondary sentence by not registering criminal record of minor offences in the national criminal record centre. This results in discriminating released offenders and further disadvantage them from bettering their lives through legal means. Such record should only be used for sentencing purposes.
- The researcher further recommends that policy maker should also consider the reduction of criminal record expungement period since most of the offenders reoffended within their six years after released due to pressure imposed by their criminal records. Additionally, prospective employers including government should be encouraged to employ ex-offenders with criminal record of minor offences or those whose criminal records do not relate to the job which they are applying for, in order to promote effective reintegration and rehabilitation.
- In addition, it is recommended that the government integrated justice cluster should develop a database for recidivism and such should be synchronized to all responsible relevant departments.

### **5.5.3. Recommendation for DCS**

- In order to avoid disadvantaging and stigmatizing the vocational-skilled released offender, a recommendation is made that DCS should consider refraining from branding the vocational certificates of the offenders with DCS Correctional Centres' names or emblems because this practice serves to discriminate and disadvantage the certificate holder.
- The researcher further recommends that DCS should consider standardising the provision of the starter packs to every released vocational-skilled offender who has no means of purchasing the resources to initiate own income-generating business, since they find it hard to be employed.
- In order to reduce the chances of breeding criminal behaviour in prison, the researcher recommends that DCS should avoid placing low and high-risk offenders in the same place.

### **5.5.4. Recommendation for future research**

- Studies that focus on the sustainability of rehabilitation and reintegration programmes for released offenders should be conducted.
- Studies that focus on assessing the effectiveness of continuous care for the released offenders and developing a mechanism for after-care monitoring and support, should be conducted. This should also include the tracking of ex-offenders in order to develop a data base for rehabilitation outcome.

## **5.6. CONCLUSION**

The focus of this chapter was to present the summary of the research, draw conclusions and make recommendations pertaining to this study topic. This chapter further presented a summary of the major research findings according to the five themes, fourteen subthemes and eighteen categories followed by conclusions and recommendations. It was the discussion of the findings, which gave

birth to the outlined recommendations to Social work practice, policy developers, DCS, as well as for future research studies.



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## **Addendum A**

### **INTERVIEW GUIDE**

#### **SECTION A: BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION**

1. How old are you?
2. Which ethnic group are you?
3. What was your marital status before reoffending?
4. What is your highest academic qualification?
5. What was your employment status prior to your reoffending?
6. Please give a list of your criminal convictions.
7. What type of sentence options did you receive?
8. What is the date for your last sentence discharge?

#### **SECTION B: STUDY QUESTIONS**

- (a) Please tell me - How did you get more than one criminal conviction?
- (b) What do you think are the contributory factors of re-offending?
- (c) What do you think contributed to your re-offending?

- (d) How did the community members perceive you during your previous criminal discharge?
- (e) What kind of support did you receive, prior and during the period after your previous criminal discharge?
- (f) Please describe the role of your family in your criminal re-offending behaviour.
- (g) What were the difficulties or challenges that you encounter during your previous discharge from prison?
- (h) How would you describe the role of economic aspects on criminal re-offending behaviour?
- (i) What do you think various professionals can do to prevent criminal re-offending behaviour?
- (j) What are the various rehabilitation programme that you have attended before your last conviction?



## **Addendum B**

### **A LETTER REQUESTING PARTICIPATION IN THE RESEARCH PROJECT**

Dear Participant

You are kindly invited to take part in a study conducted by Mareda Awelani, a postgraduate student in the Department of Social Work at the University of SA. This study is conducted in partial fulfilment of the Master's Degree in Social Work.

Research Title: Factors contributing to recidivism of adult male offender

The purpose of the research is to get an in-depth understanding of the factors that contribute to recidivism among adult male offenders and to explore and describe the contributory factors of adult male recidivism with the purpose of broadening an understanding of this phenomenon and recommending possible interventions that could help to reduce this alarming and undesirable rate of recidivism.

The study gives you an opportunity to narrate your experience and understanding about the factors contributing to recidivism among adult male offenders. The findings of the study could help to provide intervention that is likely to assist in reducing the high rate of recidivism.

An hour of your time is requested for an interview using an audio recorder. This can only be done if you sign the consent form to participate in the study. Field notes shall also be taken to record your responses. The following open ended questions will be asked to gather in-depth information:

- a. Please tell me how you got more than one criminal conviction?
- b. What do you think are the contributory factors of reoffending?

- c. What do you think contributed to your reoffending?
- d. How did the community members perceive you during your previous criminal discharge?
- e. What kind of support did you receive prior and during your life after your previous criminal discharge?
- f. Could you please describe the role of your family in your criminal reoffending behaviour?
- g. What were the difficulties or challenges that you encounter during your previous discharge from prison?
- h. How would you describe the role of economic aspects on criminal reoffending behaviour?
- i. What do you think various professionals can do to prevent criminal reoffending behaviour?
- j. What are the various rehabilitation programme that you have attended before your last conviction?

The findings of the research will be presented to UNISA in a form of a report and will be published in a professional journal. I will do my utmost to ensure your anonymity in all my written reports and I will not divulge any information that might compromise you in any way. All information that you give will be treated in a confidential manner. In addition, you can withdraw from participating in this research at any time without any consequences. Please do not hesitate to ask for clarification on any matter relating to the study.

Thank you in advance

---

Mareda Awelani  
Researcher

## **Addendum C**

### **INFORMED CONSENT BY PARTICIPANT IN THE STUDY**

I ..... volunteer to participate in a research project conducted by Mareda Awelani, a student from UNISA. I understand that the project is designed to gather information on factors contributing to recidivism in adult male offenders.

#### **As an informed participant of this research study, I understand that:**

1. My participation is voluntary and I am free to withdraw from the research study at any time and without giving a reason and without cost.
2. During this interview, notes will be taken and the interviews recorded for later transcription. This means that Mr Mareda Awelani will write up everything that I say.
3. All data will be stored anonymously once it has been collected. This means that it will be impossible to trace any information about me.
4. All information appearing in the final report will be anonymous. This means there will be nothing that will enable people to work out what I said.
5. This research has been approved by the Social Work Research Ethics Committee. This means it has been approved by a panel of professionals to make sure it meets high standards.
6. All my questions about the study have been satisfactorily answered and I am aware of what my participation involves.
7. Mr Mareda Awelani will treat my participation in this study confidentially and that anything I say in the interview will be treated confidentiality, unless it leads Mr Mareda Awelani to believe that my safety is in danger. In this case he will be unable to keep this information confidential. If this

happens he will inform me that he will have to share that information because of his concern for my welfare.

8. I understand that I will be given a copy of the consent form.

**I have read and understood the provided information, and agree to take part in this study:**

**Participant's Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**I have explained the above and answered all questions asked by the participant.**

**Researcher's Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Addendum D

### CONSENT FORM REQUESTING PERMISSION TO PUBLISH INFORMATION

As part of this project, I have made an audio-recording of you. I would like you to indicate (with ticks in the appropriate blocks next to each statement below) what uses of these records you are willing to consent to. This is completely up to you; you are not coerced to give consent. I will use the records only in ways that you agree to. In any of these records, confidentiality will be ensured so that your name will not be identified.	Place a tick [✓] next to the use of the record you consent to
The records can be studied by the research team and quotations from the transcripts made of the recordings can be used in the research report.	
The quotations from the transcripts made of the recordings can be used for scientific publications and/or meetings.	
Other researchers can use the written transcripts and/or records	

The records and quotations from the transcripts made of the recordings can be shown/used in public presentations to non-scientific groups.	
The records can be used on television or radio.	
<hr/> Signature of participant	<hr/> Date

## Addendum E

### STATEMENT AND DECLARATION

#### STATEMENT BY THE RESEARCHER

I, ....., declare that I have explained the information given in this document to \_\_\_\_\_ (name of participant); he was encouraged and given ample time to ask me any questions; this conversation was conducted in English and or his vernacular.

Signed at \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_ 20\_\_\_\_\_

..... (place).....(date)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the researcher

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of witness

**Addendum F**

LETTER REQUESTING PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH STUDY

Municipal manager  
Vhembe district municipality  
Old parliament building  
Thohoyandou  
0950

Dear Sir

RE: Request for Permission to Conduct Research Study at Vhembe District Municipality

I am Mareda Awelani a student doing Master's in Social Work degree at UNISA. I wish to conduct a research for my master's thesis. My research topic is: Factors contributing to recidivism of adult male offenders. The participants of the study are adult male offenders with a record of reoffending within Vhembe District Municipality. This project will be conducted under the supervision of Dr Malesa K.J (Supervisor- UNISA). I am hereby requesting your approval and permission to conduct my study in Vhembe District Municipality.

I will provide you with a copy of my research proposal stipulating the research process, as well as a copy of the ethical approval which I will receive from UNISA Research Ethics Committee. Upon



completion of the study, I undertake to provide the Municipality with recommendations based on the research findings. For further information, do not hesitate to contact me on my contact details below.

Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter.

Yours Sincerely

---

Mareda Awelani  
UNISA Social Work Masters Candidate  
072 2324 760  
[awelanimareda@gmail.com](mailto:awelanimareda@gmail.com)



## ADDENDUM G

### RESERACHER ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Hereby, Mareda Awelani, ID. 7702035956089 in my personal capacity as a researcher, acknowledge that I am aware of and familiar with the stipulations and content of the:

- Unisa Research Policy
- Unisa Ethics Policy
- Unisa IP Policy

and that I shall conform to and abide by these policy requirements.

Signature

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mareda Awelani", is written over a horizontal line.

Date

25/7/06/03

**Addendum H**

**CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE STUDY**

I ....., commit that the person asking my consent to take part in this study has told me about the nature, procedure, potential benefits and anticipated inconvenience of participating in the study.

I have read (or had the researcher explained to me) and understood the study as explained in the information sheet.

I had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and am prepared to participate in the study.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and I am free to withdraw at any time without any penalty.

I am aware that the findings of this study will be processed into a research report, journal publications and or conference proceedings, but that my participation will be kept confidential unless otherwise specified.

I agree to a recordings of the: ..... (Date of data collection)

I have received a copy of informed consent agreement.

**Participant name and surname:** \_\_\_\_\_ (Please Print)

\_\_\_\_\_

Participant's signature

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

**Researcher's name and surname:** \_\_\_\_\_ (Please print)

\_\_\_\_\_

Researcher's signature

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

## **Addendum I**

### **Voluntary consent letter to conduct debriefing**

Enq: Ndou N.V

Tel: 079 490 1511

### **Voluntary consent letter to conduct debriefing**

The content of this letter serves to inform and confirm that I Ndou Ndiimafhi Victor has voluntarily avail myself to assist the researcher Mr. Mareda A.G to conduct debriefing sessions for his research participants. I am a professional Social Worker who attended training on conducting debriefing sessions. I will abide by my professional code of ethics when rendering this service.

Hopping that the content of this letter will serve its intended purpose.

Yours in social services

Ndou Ndiimafhi Victor

Date:

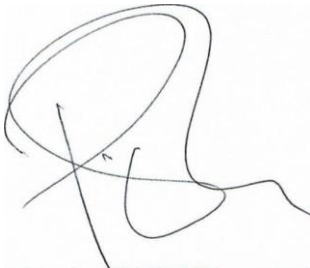
2019/09/20

## Addendum J

### Letter from editor

**17 December, 2020**

This is to certify that I, **Dr P Kaburise**, of the English Department, University of Venda, have proofread the research report titled - **FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO RECIDIVISM OF ADULT MALE OFFENDERS** - by Godfrey Awelani Mareda. I have indicated some amendments which the student has undertaken to effect, before the final report is submitted.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'P. Kaburise', with a large loop at the top and a trailing line.

**Dr P Kaburise (079492745; [phyllis.kaburise@gmail.com](mailto:phyllis.kaburise@gmail.com))**

---

**Dr P Kaburise: BA (Hons) University of Ghana (Legon, Ghana); MEd University of East Anglia (Cambridge/East Anglia, United Kingdom); Cert. English Second Language Teaching, (Wellington, New Zealand); PhD University of Pretoria (South Africa)**

## Addendum K

### Ethics approval certificate



#### SOCIAL WORK RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (SWREC)

Date: 10 January 2020

Dear Mr AG Mareda

**DECISION:**  
Ethics approval from 10 January 2020 to 10 January 2021

SWREC Reference #: 2020-SWREC-43364853  
Name: Mr AG Mareda  
Student #: 43364853  
Staff #: NA

**Researcher(s):** Name: Mr AG Mareda  
Contact details: 43364853@mylife.unisa.ac.za; 072 2324 760

**Supervisor(s):** Name: Dr KJ Malesa  
Contact details: maleskj@unisa.ac.za; (012) 429 4780

**Title of research:**

Factors contributing to recidivism of adult male offenders

**Qualification:** Master of Social Work (MSW)

Thank you for the application for research ethics clearance by the Social Work Research Ethics Committee (SWREC) for the above mentioned research. Ethics approval has been granted effective from **10 January 2020**.

The following are standards requirements attached to all approval of all studies:

1. Approval will be for a period of twelve months from the date of issue of the certificate. At the end of this period, if the study has been completed, abandoned, discontinued or not completed for any reason you are required to submit a report on the project. If you complete the work earlier than you had planned, you must submit a report as soon as the work is completed. Reporting template can be requested from the SWREC administrator on [radebn1@unisa.ac.za](mailto:radebn1@unisa.ac.za)
2. However, at the **end of 12 months' period** if the study is still current, you should instead submit an application for renewal of the approval.
3. Please remember that you must notify the committee in writing regarding any amendments to the study.
4. You must notify the committee immediately in the event of any adverse effects on participants or any unforeseen event that might affect continued ethical acceptability of the study.
5. At all times you are responsible for the ethical conduct of your research in accordance with the SWREC standard operating procedures, terms of references, National Health Research Council (NHREC) and university guidelines.

Yours sincerely

Dr KJ Malesa  
Chairperson of SWREC  
Email: [maleskj@unisa.ac.za](mailto:maleskj@unisa.ac.za)  
Tel No.: (012) 429 4780



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# FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO RECIDIVISM OF ADULT MALE OFFENDERS

*by* Awelani Mareda

**Submission date:** 19-Dec-2020 17:38PM (UTC+0200)

**Submission ID:** 1152028628

**File name:** AWELANI\_GODFREY\_MAREDA\_MSW\_THESIS\_DECEMBER\_2020-UNISA.docx (719.78K)

**Word count:** 42349

**Character count:** 237676



# FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO RECIVIDISM OF ADULT MALE OFFENDERS

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